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PREPARATIONS FOR THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN: ACTION FOR EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE: REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NAIROBI FORWARD-LOOKING STRATEGIES FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

Second review and appraisal of the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

II. CRITICAL AREAS OF CONCERN

C. Inequality in access to health and related services

1. In the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, health is one of the three sub-themes, along with employment and education, of the three goals - equality, development and peace - of the United Nations Decade for Women. In designing measures for the implementation of the basic Strategies at the national level, a number of areas for specific action were identified.

2. With the recognition of the vital role of women as providers of health care and the need for strengthening basic services for the delivery of health care came the need both to promote the positive health of women at all stages of life and to recognize the importance of women's participation in the achievement of Health for All by the Year 2000. The Strategies stressed the need to increase

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the participation of women in managerial and higher professional positions, through appropriate legislation, training and supportive action and to change the attitudes and composition of health personnel.

3. They also emphasized the necessity for providing health education to the entire family and the need to combine promotional, preventive and curative health, and access to water and sanitary facilities that involved women in all stages of planning and implementation. They stressed as well the need to comply with the International Code of Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes, forbidding any commercial pressures that interfered with the priority of breast-feeding, the application of vaccination programmes for children and pregnant women and the elimination of any differences in coverage between boys and girls, as well as the eradication of the marketing of unsafe drugs and of practices detrimental to health and the provision of access to essential drugs.

4. The Strategies called for the provision of adequate nutrition for women and children and the promotion of interventions to reduce the prevalence of nutritional diseases such as anaemia in women of all ages, particularly young women.

5. They also stressed recognition of the fact that the ability of women to control their own fertility was an important basis for the enjoyment of other rights. The Strategies called for the provision of appropriate health facilities, adapted to women's specific needs, and the reduction of the unacceptably high levels of maternal mortality. The need was also expressed to strengthen maternal and child health and the family-planning components of primary health care, and to produce family-planning information and create services, pursuant to the basic human right of all couples and individuals to decide freely and informedly the number and spacing of their children. The urgency of developing policies to encourage delay in the commencement of child-bearing was indicated, since pregnancy in adolescent girls had adverse effects on morbidity and mortality, as well as the need to change discriminatory attitudes towards women and girls through health education. There was a need for providing adequate fertility-control methods, consistent with internationally recognized human rights, as well as with changing individual and cultural values.

6. The need to encourage participation of local women's organizations in primary-health-care activities was part of the focus of the Strategies, as were the application of gender-specific indicators for monitoring women's health and the necessity of enhancing the concerns with occupational health and the harmonization of work and family responsibilities.

7. The Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 1990/15 (adopted by the Council upon the recommendation of the Commission on the Status of Women, at its thirty-fourth session), adopted the recommendations and conclusions arising from the first review and appraisal of the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies, contained in the annex to that resolution. The following constitute the most detailed recommendations arising out of the review process.

"Recommendation XII.

"15. Since the beginning of the 1980s, there has been a decline in the standard of health and nutrition of women in parts of every developing region due, inter alia, to a decline in per capita expenditure on health. This is a particularly alarming situation since maternal and neonatal health are crucial to infant survival. Infant and child mortality rates have been rising in a number of countries after having declined for decades.

"Recommendation XIII. Governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and the public in general should be aware of the decline in women's health in developing countries. Improvement of women's health by the provision of appropriate and accessible health services should be a priority within the goal of health for all by the year 2000.

"Women constitute the majority of health-care workers in most countries. They should be enabled to play a much larger role in decision-making for health. Governments, international non-governmental organizations and women's organizations should undertake programmes aimed at improving women's health by ensuring access to adequate maternal and child health care, family planning, safe motherhood programmes, nutrition, programmes for female-specific diseases and other primary health care services in relation to the goal of health for all by the year 2000.

"The World Health Organization and other organizations of the United Nations system should further develop emergency programmes to cope with the deteriorating conditions of women's health mainly in developing countries, with particular attention to nutrition, maternal health care and sanitation.

"16. Women's access to information and services relating to population and family planning are improving only slowly in most countries. A woman's ability to control her own fertility continues to be a major factor enabling her to protect her health, achieve her personal objectives and ensure the strength of her family. All women should be in a position to plan and organize their lives.

"Recommendation XIV. Governments, non-governmental organizations and women's movements should develop programmes to enable women to implement their decisions on the timing and spacing of their children. These programmes should include population education programmes linked to women's rights and the role of women in development, as well as the sharing of family responsibilities by men and boys. Social services should be provided to help women reconcile family and employment requirements.

"Family planning programmes should be developed or extended to enable women to implement their decisions on the timing and spacing of their children and for safe motherhood.

"The United Nations Secretariat, the United Nations Population Fund, the World Health Organization and other organizations of the United Nations system should develop collaborative programmes to link the role of women in development to questions related to population.

"17. During the past five years, women's health, both physical and psychological, has been increasingly affected in many countries by the consumption and abuse of alcohol, narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

"Recommendation XV. Governments and other competent national authorities should establish national policies and programmes on women's health with respect to the consumption and abuse of alcohol, narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. Strong preventive as well as rehabilitative measures should be taken.

"In addition, efforts should be intensified to reduce occupational health hazards faced by women and to discourage illicit drug use.

"18. The emergence, since the Nairobi Conference, of new threats to the health and status of women, such as the alarming increase in sexually transmitted diseases and the acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) pandemic, requires urgent action from both medical and social institutions.

"Recommendation XVI. Greater attention is also needed with respect to the issue of women and AIDS. Efforts in this regard should be an integral part of the World Health Organization Global Programme on AIDS. Urgent action and action-oriented research are also required by social institutions at all levels, in particular the United Nations system, national AIDS committees and non-governmental organizations, to inform women of the threat of AIDS to their health and status."

1. Women's health: an overall view

8. In the 1991 progress report on women, health and development of the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), 1/ presented to the Forty-fourth World Health Assembly, it was recognized that women's health was influenced by biological, environmental, social, economic and cultural factors. 2/ It was further recognized that women's health, their status and their multiple contributions were pivotal links between the health of a population and its prospects of sustainable development - prospects which, despite the remarkable progress of the 1960s and 1970s, had been dimming in the 1980s. 3/

9. Setting an agenda for women's health must begin with a recognition of the fact not only that the health situation of women is different from that of men, but also that the systems identifying and determining that health situation are fashioned according to gender-biased models. Gender discrimination has tended to be hidden within the general issue of poverty and underdevelopment. In practice, women and girls suffer disproportionately because of their low status in society.

10. While most of the world's poor suffer from poor health and nutrition, in many countries, particularly those of South Asia, rates of malnutrition are generally higher among females than among males of the same age group. In many countries, food is distributed within the household according to a member's status rather than according to nutritional needs.

11. Low health status is the outcome of biological as well as social, political and economic factors acting together. Many women suffering from poor health status are found to lack knowledge, information, skills, purchasing power, income-earning capacity and access to essential health services. Health must be considered in a holistic manner.

12. Reliable and high-quality health services promote sustainable development. The greatest reduction in fertility rates have resulted from a combination of women's improved economic and social status, education and access to reproductive-health-care services.

13. Despite the fact that in households and sometimes in the community, women are the primary providers of health care, they often lack access to outside health care for themselves. For example, data show that in many countries there are fewer women than men who are treated in hospitals, receive prescriptions for medication, receive timely treatment from qualified practitioners and survive common diseases. Restricted access to health services leaves women less capable of taking care not only of their own health, but also of that of their children, thereby perpetuating a trend of high child mortality.

14. Ensuring women equal access to the benefits of public health care is critically dependent upon gender-specific health strategies. This is true because men and women tend to suffer from different illnesses. Women are far more likely to suffer from reproductive role-related illnesses such as sexually transmitted diseases, anaemia, and the complications resulting from child-bearing. Targeting these health problems clearly involves different strategies for men and women.

15. Under increasing economic pressure in the past four years, 37 of the poorest countries have cut health-related spending by 50 per cent. Some countries report on the implementation of social compensation programmes to offset the impact of structural adjustment policies.

16. A major factor mentioned by many countries is the focus on primary health care, promoted by most developing countries. To provide equal care to both rural and urban women, many countries have adopted the system of primary health care including family planning, maternal and child care, vaccination and reinforcement for the curing of diseases, including prevention of sexually transmitted diseases and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV)/AIDS.

17. In Asia and the Pacific, the focus of policy in the area of women's health has generally been within the context of reproductive health. Fertility control and family planning have been the major set of issues around which health policies and programmes have generally evolved in the past.

18. Some countries report that the fact that women have come to dominate the teaching and health professions has resulted in the feminization of those professions, and a consequent lowering within them of prestige and pay. Several national reports acknowledge the skills of women in the areas of birth attendance and traditional medicine practices, and various areas of self-healing, although these practices have not yet been duly incorporated in the medical system.

19. In many countries, there is not yet a policy for women's health, except for reproductive health. The reports often link improvements in the overall situation of women's health to demographic trends and improvement in infrastructure. Health is considered an outcome of combined factors promoting quality of life.

20. Many countries note the contribution of specific health programmes, like the expanded programme of immunization, to women's health, and the contribution of local non-governmental organizations in health campaigns.

21. Rural health centres are in general on the decline, and in much poorer condition than urban ones. For instance, one country reports that a person in the rural areas consults the health centre about twice a year, versus four times a year in the urban areas.

2. Environmental health

22. Sustaining the global cycles and systems upon which all life depends is a first requisite of health. The combination of population and production growth and unsustainable consumption patterns has, however, heavily depleted natural resources, threatening the environmental base upon which health and survival depend.

23. In developing countries, where populations are still expanding, pressure on scarce resources has made it very difficult to improve living conditions. In 1990, an estimated 1.5 billion people did not have access to safe water, and almost 2 billion people lacked sanitary means for disposing of excreta.

24. Many countries have subscribed to the goal of universal access to safe water for the year 2000. Some reports indicate that improvements have been made in sanitary education and in the application of low-cost technologies. One country refers to an initiative to save on wood energy, for example, through cheaper production of charcoal and improved charcoal stoves.

3. The life-cycle perspective

25. In the case of women's health, the using of a lifelong perspective that takes into account the whole life-span is of paramount importance, since health conditions in one phase of a woman's life affect not only its subsequent phases but also future generations. It is also useful to look at common issues or themes so as to identify a useful framework from which a feasible agenda for action can be elaborated.

26. For every 100 females delivered into the world, there are 105 males born. The female human being is biologically more resistant, and the surplus of male infants is nature's way of balancing the sex ratio in the population. Ordinarily, the number of surviving girls soon surpasses that of boys. However, there are parts of the world where this male-to-female imbalance is never overcome.

27. Human intervention, in the form of neglect of girls, favours the survival of males. In several countries in the Asian and Pacific region, the preference for sons over daughters has resulted in a differential treatment of infants by sex. The data show that there is a higher risk that girls, as compared with boys, will die before age 5, in spite of the natural biological advantage of girls. In Bangladesh, the under-five mortality rate for girls was recorded as 175 per 1,000 live births, as against 160 for boys, and in Nepal, 187 for girls as against 173 for boys. The pattern is much more alarming in regions within large countries like India and China, known for their strong preference for sons. In India, there are 957 females aged four years or under for every 1,000 males in the population.

28. Preference for sons is most marked in South Asia and the Middle East, but is not confined to those regions alone. In Colombia, the number of deaths of boys between the ages of one and two is 75 as against a figure of 100 for girls in the same age group. Recent empirical evidence suggests that excess female mortality during childhood also occurs in Latin America and the Caribbean, particularly in the less developed countries with low life expectancy.

29. Globally, at least 2 million girls per year are at risk of having to submit to genital mutilation. WHO estimates that 90 million women in the world today have - at some time between the ages of 2 and 15, depending on local custom, and most commonly between the ages of 4 and 8 - undergone one of the procedures that fall under this category. Most live in Africa, a few in Asia, and, increasingly, due to migration processes, some in Europe and North America.

30. Many Governments have publicly denounced the practice. Some have translated their concerns into laws prohibiting female genital mutilation or into programmes to persuade people to abandon the practice. Several countries report on the existence of harmful traditional practices and their impact on women's health. One report, on the other hand, highlights coexisting cultural practices that are beneficial, including respect for and assistance to elders, mutual assistance networks and breast-feeding.

4. Adolescents

31. More than 50 per cent of the world population is under age 25, and 80 per cent of the 1.5 billion young people between the ages of 10 and 24 live in developing countries. Although fertility levels have been decreasing in many regions, the fertility rates of adolescents are very high and in some cases increasing. At present, it is estimated that close to 15 million infants per year (10 per cent of total births) are born to adolescent mothers.

32. Adolescents girls are more vulnerable to reproductive health problems than young men. The age of the first sexual encounter is declining everywhere. For example, a survey in Nigeria found that 43 per cent of schoolgirls in the age group 14-19 were sexually active. During the 1980s, 30.2 per cent of female adolescents in Jamaica and 12.7 per cent in Mexico were sexually active before they were 15 years of age. The proportion of females under 20 years of age who used contraceptives at first coitus was 40 per cent in Jamaica, 21 per cent in Mexico and 8.5 per cent in Guatemala.

33. The rate of pregnancy among girls in the age group 15-19 is 18 per cent in Africa, 8 per cent in Latin America, 5 per cent in North American and 3 per cent in Europe. In Venezuela, the number of births to girls under age 15 rose by 32 per cent between 1980 and 1988. In the Caribbean, 60 per cent of first births are to teenagers, most of whom are unmarried.

34. One quarter of the 500,000 women who die every year from pregnancy-and-childbirth-related causes are teenagers. A survey in Bangladesh found that maternal mortality in age group 10-14 was five times higher than in age group 20-24.

35. The sense of urgency in addressing the situation is justified by the sheer numbers of girls involved. In 1990, girls aged 15 or under constituted 40 per cent of the female population in Egypt and Morocco, 44 per cent in Algeria and Mauritania, 45 per cent in Ethiopia and Mali, 46 per cent in Djibouti and Somalia, 48 per cent in Nigeria, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania, 50 per cent in Côte d'Ivoire, and 52 per cent in Kenya. Increasing concern for the status of women and girls prompted the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) to declare 1990 the Year of the Girl Child.

36. Some countries report an increase in the life expectancy of girls over that of boys. One country reports that owing to the availability of medical facilities and health units in all villages, life expectancy at birth for girls increased from 2 to 66 per cent, or at a rate of 127 per cent, from 1981-1982 to 1992-1993.

37. Many countries indicate strong policies of readmitting teenage mothers into secondary schools. Many have included courses on family-life education at school. One country reports a peer approach counselling programme at the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA).

5. Reproductive health

38. The health of women in the years 15-45 is influenced predominantly by their reproductive and maternal roles. Despite progress in a number of key areas, the morbidity and mortality rates of women due to reproduction remain unnecessarily high in many areas of the globe. Maternal mortality is the indicator that exhibits the widest disparity among countries. Of the 150-200 million pregnancies that occur world wide each year, about 23 million lead to serious complications such as post-partum haemorrhage, hypertensive disorders, eclampsia, puerperal sepsis and abortion. Half a million of these end with the loss of the mother.

39. Ninety-nine per cent of these deaths take place in developing countries. The incidence of maternal death ranges from almost non-existent to very high (the rates in some poor countries reach as high as 1,600 times those in industrialized countries). Scattered information suggests that in some countries, one fourth to one half of all deaths of women of child-bearing age result from pregnancy and its complications.

40. Maternal mortality rates in central and eastern Europe, apart from Romania and Albania, are about twice as high as the average for Europe as a whole. In Romania and Albania, maternal mortality has fallen dramatically since the legalization of abortion, as previous rates were largely due to unsafe abortions. Unsafe abortions are among the top causes of maternal mortality in all countries except Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan's exceptional status might be due to the way it defines such practices. In the Russian Federation, nearly 200 abortions are reported for every 100 births.

41. Comparing new information on maternal mortality with that available five years ago suggests that pregnancy and childbirth have become safer for women in most of Asia and in parts of Latin America. Nevertheless, data are still too scattered and more needs to be done to have a more complete picture. However, frequent child-bearing, which can seriously compromise the health and nutrition of a woman's children, continues to be characteristic of large numbers in many areas of the world.

42. One reason for the lack of progress is the tendency to look for rapid solutions to deep-seated problems. It has been found that safer motherhood requires a massive and simultaneous attack on all the elements contributing to the problem, including those under the headings of legislation, social services, rights of women. As regards the health sector alone, the system's entire infrastructure - including community mobilization, pre- and post-natal care, clean and safe delivery with trained assistance and above all timely referral for management of complications - needs strengthening in most countries where maternal mortality is high.

43. International commitments setting goals for reduction of maternal mortality by 50 per cent for the year 2000 have been endorsed by most countries. Many countries mention the Safe Motherhood Initiative, adopted by WHO, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in 1987. Many countries report that the increased provision and improvement of existing maternity services at all levels of the health system is the most effective means of reducing maternal mortality. In addition, quality reproductive-health-care services, including family planning, together with good primary health care represent important interventions. Many countries report increments in health care to address the matter of maternal mortality. Several reports mention a national programme for maternal health, with campaigns on reproductive health and family planning. Several countries report the inclusion in their expanded programmes of immunization of antitetanus campaigns.

6. Fertility

44. Fertility levels, measured by the total fertility rate, have continued their tendency to decline in all regions. World fertility fell by 10.5 per cent, from 3.8 to 3.4 births per woman, between the periods 1975-1980 and 1985-1990. The total fertility rate varied from 8.5 (the highest) in Rwanda, to 1.27 (the lowest), in Italy.

45. Sub-Saharan Africa is the only region of the developing world that has not yet undergone a widespread decline in fertility. A decline has started in three countries of the area: Botswana, Kenya and Zimbabwe. Ethiopia reports a fertility rate of 7.5 births per woman in 1992.

46. The total fertility rate continued to decline in all subregions of Asia and the Pacific throughout the post-Nairobi Conference era. Between 1985 and 1992, it dropped from 2.42 to 2.19 in developing East Asia and from 3.69 to 3.37 in South-East Asia. In South Asia, it fell from 4.71 to 4.36 and in the Pacific Islands, from 4.92 to 4.61. The developed countries of the region, namely, Australia, Japan and New Zealand, which had already achieved a total fertility rate of 1.71 by 1985, experienced a further decline to 1.56, by 1992.

47. In the Caribbean, many countries have experienced nearly a 50 per cent drop, from about 6.0 to 3.0, in total fertility rate levels within the last 30 years, and the rate is expected to decline further in the next decade.

48. Although fertility rates have gone down world wide, many women still lack access to information and services, or cannot make use of them because of economic limitations or cultural norms. Only 27 per cent of couples use contraception; 140 million women in developing countries become pregnant although they did not want a child. Every year, over 20 million women terminate unwanted pregnancies through unsafe abortions, as a result of lack of access to relevant care and services such as family planning, costly contraceptive methods, lack of information, and restrictive legislative practices. Of these, 15 million survive, but with a wide range of long-term disabilities. Some 60,000-100,000 die.

49. One country reports that in 1992, for the first time since the introduction of family planning, the gender-differential participation ratio became 55 to 45 in favour of men, owing to a broader public awareness of the relative seriousness of the side-effects of contraceptive measures taken by women. Some countries consider that with respect to utilization of contraceptives, universal coverage has been reached: only 4 per cent of sexually active women are without any such coverage. The protection and monitoring of maternity programmes have been further reinforced in the last years. One country reports the establishment of family counselling services, with a counsellor-to-woman ratio of 1.4:2,000.

7. Cervical cancer and sexually transmitted diseases

50. Cancers of all types among women are increasing. Those affecting women more frequently in both developed and developing countries are stomach cancer, breast cancer, cervical cancer and colorectal cancer.

51. Cervical cancer is the most common form of cancer in women in most developing countries and the second most common form of cancer in women in the world as a whole. There are an estimated 450,000 new cases (a realistic figure including undiagnosed early cases would go as high as 900,000), and a death toll of 300,000, each year.

52. Breast cancer is one of the major causes of female mortality in developed countries. The number of women developing breast cancer and dying from the disease is growing steadily every year. As in cervical cancer, early detection plays a major role in reduction of mortality.

53. Prevalence rates of sexually transmitted diseases are higher among females than among males in those aged 20 years or under. In one industrialized country, 6 million women, half of whom are teenagers, acquire a sexually transmitted disease.

54. A number of countries report the launching of national awareness-raising campaigns. Several countries report the establishment of national programmes of early detection of breast cancer.

8. HIV/AIDS

55. AIDS emerged as a major health problem in the mid-1980s, in both the developed and the developing countries, threatening to undermine major gains in the reduction of morbidity and mortality. A decade ago, women seemed to be on the periphery of the AIDS epidemic, but today almost half of newly infected adults are women. Women are more susceptible to contracting the disease for biological reasons and because of their lower social status.

56. WHO estimates that well over 14 million adults and children have been infected with HIV since the start of the pandemic, and projects that this cumulative figure may reach 30-40 million by the year 2000. It is estimated that over half a million children have been infected with HIV from their infected mothers. The epidemic incapacitates people at the ages when they are needed most for the support of the young and the elderly. WHO estimates that by the year 2000, 13 million women will have been infected with AIDS.

57. The AIDS pandemic is most devastating in sub-Saharan Africa. WHO had estimated that by 1992, 1.5 million adults in the region would develop AIDS, and more than 7 million would be infected with HIV. In this region, HIV transmission is predominantly through heterosexual relations, and among the infected population, almost the same proportions of men and women are represented. In the 15 countries in Eastern, Central and Western Africa where by 1990 above 1 per cent of the adult population was infected, the already low level of life expectancy at birth (about 50 years in 1985-1990) is projected to

remain unchanged through the year 2000. Because as many women as men carry the virus, WHO estimates that child mortality may increase by as much as 50 per cent through mother-to-child transmission in much of sub-Saharan Africa during the 1990s. In Ethiopia, the trend between 1987 and 1993 (2.4:1 compared with 1.4:1) indicates that the male-to-female ratio is narrowing.

58. At the beginning, transmission of HIV in North America, Europe and Australia occurred basically through homosexual contact, but increasingly heterosexuals and drug-users are becoming the agents of transmission, especially in North America. According to WHO estimates, 1.6 million cases of HIV and close to 350,000 cases of AIDS might occur by 1992. In Latin America, the Caribbean and the urban sections of Brazil are the areas most affected. It is estimated that currently about 1 million people in the region may be affected by HIV.

59. Asia and the Pacific has exhibited the highest growth rate in HIV/AIDS among women, many of whom are married women with a single partner. India and Thailand are the countries worst affected. There are no estimates available for the region as a whole, but the estimate for India is up to about 1 million, and for Thailand about 400,000.

60. A Global Programme on AIDS was established by WHO in 1987. By 1990, more than 150 countries had established national AIDS committees to coordinate national control programmes. Part of the problem that has to be faced concerns the reluctance of national authorities to acknowledge the existence of HIV infection, and its real magnitude. Another challenge is the discrimination against people with HIV/AIDS, a response often connected with the stigma attached to sexually transmitted diseases, and the mistaken belief that HIV can be transmitted through casual social contacts.

61. The Global Programme on AIDS strategy stresses a gender-specific approach, emphasizing women's social, physical and economic vulnerability. In most countries where HIV/AIDS has become a serious threat or is expected to become one, national AIDS committees have been established to formulate prevention programmes. Several countries are devoting resources to research, guidance, educational material and technical assistance. National campaigns of education and prevention have been developed in many countries. Several have included prevention components in school curricula. A few countries report close collaboration with non-governmental organizations in training peer leaders as a way of improving service delivery.

9. Health consequences of violence

62. Although grossly underreported, violence against women has assumed alarming proportions, as can be seen in section D below. Only recently have domestic violence and rape been viewed as a public health problem, yet they are a significant cause of female mortality and morbidity. Violence against women leads to psychological trauma and depression, injuries, sexually transmitted diseases and HIV, suicide and murder.

63. Accurate figures on the prevalence of domestic violence and rape are not available, but from existing data it is known that rape and domestic violence account for about 5 per cent of the total disease burden among women aged 15-44 in developing countries. In industrialized countries, where the total disease burden is much smaller, this share rises to 19 per cent. In these countries, assaults have been reported to cause more injuries to women than vehicle accidents, rape and mugging combined.

64. In Asia, non-governmental organizations have played a pivotal role in publicizing the situation. They have collaborated with Governments in many countries in efforts involving the provision of legal aid and legal counselling to victims of violence, and the running of trauma centres and shelters for abused women.

10. Health issues related to ageing

65. Life expectancy for women has risen by eight years since 1970 in the low- and middle-income countries, and by five years world wide, though this gain has been less than that enjoyed by men.

66. In the years to come the number of women over age 65, in both industrialized and developing countries, will increase; and the total number of these women will rise from 330 million in 1990 to 600 million in 2015. Women over age 50 constitute more than one third of the entire female population of the United States of America. In addition, women constitute about 59 per cent of the United States population aged 65 or over, and 72 per cent of the population over age 85. In contrast, in Lithuania, female life expectancy decreased, as it did in Poland and some of the newly independent States.

67. Of these elderly women, many will suffer from the chronic diseases associated with ageing such as osteoporosis and dementia, or from the consequences of neglect such as malnutrition, alienation and loneliness. Reporting on health conditions of the elderly female population is still scanty, especially in the developing countries. Osteoporosis affects 10 per cent of women world wide above age 60. In one industrialized country, osteoporosis is responsible for 1.3 million bone fractures per year. Most of the women affected become totally dependent as a result of the illness.

68. When women do seek care for their health problems, the result is often overprescription of tranquillizers - especially to older women - instead of further investigation. A North American study found that physicians prescribed psychoactive drugs 2.5 times more often to women over age 60 than to men in the same age group.

69. Many industrialized countries are concerned with the rising demand for health-care services on the part of their growing population of elderly people. Some developing countries are restating the importance of the traditional family and community networks in caring for the elderly.

11. Malnutrition

70. Adequate nutritional intake is particularly important for girls and women. Discriminatory feeding practices in childhood sometimes lead to protein-energy malnutrition, anaemia and other micronutrient deficiencies in young girls. Higher rates of malnutrition generally exist among females than among males in the same age group. In many developing countries, food is distributed within the household according to a member's status rather than according to nutritional needs.

71. Problems caused by malnutrition in girls are responsible for subsequent problems during childbirth, like obstructed labour, fistulas and birth asphyxia. Because women need more iron than men, and because they tend to receive a lower share in the distribution of food, globally 43 per cent of women and 51 per cent of pregnant women suffer from anaemia. A third of women of reproductive age who are not pregnant have anaemia. In developing countries, 56 per cent of pregnant women are anaemic and up to 7 per cent suffer from severe anaemia. Virtually all adolescent girls in developing countries suffer from iron deficiency.

72. Because their mothers lack iodine, 30,000 babies are stillborn every year, and over 120,000 are born cretins. Iodine deficiency is the most common and preventable cause of mental retardation. At least 25 per cent of adolescent girls are affected. This deficiency leads not only to goitre but to brain damage as well, and also affects women's reproductive function. In developing countries, stunting caused by energy-protein malnutrition in girls affects 43 per cent of all women aged 15 or over.

73. Many countries mention the adoption at the World Summit for Social Development of the goal of a one-third reduction in iron-deficiency anaemia by the year 2000. Some countries have improved their nutrition surveillance system. Many report a direct impact of structural adjustment programmes on the nutritional situation.

12. Mental health

74. Community-based studies and treatment studies indicate that women are disproportionately affected by mental health problems and that their vulnerability is closely associated with their marital status, their work and their roles in society. Epidemiologic evidence is accumulating that links mental disorders with alienation, powerlessness and poverty, conditions most frequently experienced by women.

75. Several reports indicate a tendency in health services to shift their emphasis from the provision of curative services to the prevention of ill health. Although most health measures still focus on physical ill health, well-being-related measures are becoming increasingly important.

13. Substance abuse

76. Over the next 30 years, tobacco-related deaths will more than double, so that starting from the year 2020 well over 1 million adult women will die from tobacco-related illnesses annually. Women are smoking in increasing numbers in developing countries and are a special target of cigarette advertising world wide. In France, a recent survey among students showed that girls today smoke more than boys. There is also a rapidly growing trend among girls towards the use of other drugs.

77. Some 30 million women have contracted diseases due to alcohol intake. Alcoholic cirrhosis is the cause of 300,000 deaths among women each year. The ill-treatment of 50 per cent of battered wives is alcohol-related.

78. Illicit drug-abuse problems among females have been underestimated, as statistics in many countries are not gender-disaggregated. A few countries report a new bio-psycho-social approach in health services, distinct from the focus only on maternal and child health.

Notes

1/ Document WHO/FHE/WHD/92.5.

2/ Ibid., para. 16.

3/ Ibid., para. 10.

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MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NAIROBI FORWARD-LOOKING STRATEGIES FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

Second review and appraisal of the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

II. CRITICAL AREAS OF CONCERN

D. Violence against women

1. The Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies place violence against women under the basic strategies for addressing the issue of peace. Reference was made to specific groups of women deserving special concern, including abused women, women victims of trafficking and involuntary prostitution, and women in detention and subject to penal law. The strategies state that violence is a major obstacle to the achievement of peace and the other objectives of the Decade. Women victims of violence should be given comprehensive assistance, with legal measures, national machinery, preventive policies and institutional forms of assistance. These should be specially applied in the case of the groups of special concern.

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2. In Economic and Social Council resolution 1990/15, on recommendations and conclusions arising from the first review and appraisal of the Nairobi Strategies, adopted at the recommendation of the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-fourth session, the Council states that:

> "23. The recognition that violence against women in the family and society is pervasive and cuts across lines of income, class and culture must be matched by urgent and effective steps to eliminate its incidence. Violence against women derives from their unequal status in society.
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> "Recommendation XXII. Governments should take immediate measures to establish appropriate penalties for violence against women in the family, the work place and society. Governments and other relevant agencies should also undertake policies to prevent, control and reduce the impact of violence on women in the family, the work place and society. Governments and relevant agencies, women's organizations, non-governmental organizations and the private sector should develop appropriate correctional, educational and social services, including shelters, training programmes for law enforcement officers, the judiciary and health and social service personnel, as well as adequate deterrent and corrective measures. The number of women at all levels of law enforcement, legal assistance and the judicial system should be increased."

3. A preliminary review of the national reports prepared for the current review and appraisal reveals that, in contrast to the previous review and appraisal, most countries have reported on violence against women and the problem has been largely recognized. Most reports indicate that the issue has attracted national attention and emphasis has been placed on legal reforms, by considering violence against women as a crime and increasing the penalties for it. A large number of countries indicated the adoption of programmes intended to prevent domestic violence or provide assistance to victims of violence. Most of these programmes were initiated by non-governmental organizations and subsequently supported by the Governments concerned. Other reports acknowledged a need for these kinds of programmes but indicated that funds were lacking.

1. Trends

4. The issue of violence against women became a matter of priority in the second half of the 1980s. The increasing concern about victims of violence and the need for change was voiced both by bodies within the United Nations and by non-governmental organizations. The adoption, by the General Assembly, in resolution 48/104, of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, signalled an intention to deal with the problem in its full complexity and to give appropriate priority to domestic violence.

5. Debates relating to women and development in the South led to the identification, frequently by grass-roots women, of various manifestations of violence against women. 1/ Concentration by activists and scholars in both the North and South was initially on sexual violence by those outside the family, including sexual harassment in the workplace and elsewhere, forced prostitution and trafficking. 2/ This was followed by attention to violence against women in

the family, often described as domestic violence. Perhaps because violence in the family context challenges the universal image of the family as a supportive and loving haven, the natural and fundamental group unit of society, 3/ and because violence against women in the family represents the most fundamental example of the persistent inequality between women and men and, at the same time, serves to entrench that inequality in other spheres, violence against women in this context has remained the central focus of activism and scholarship within the general issue of violence against women.

6. Attention to issues of sexual and domestic violence resulted in the revelation of further manifestations of violence against women. These different manifestations occur within the family but are tolerated or, indeed, condoned, by the community and State. These include female foeticide 4/ and infanticide, the neglect and physical and sexual abuse of girl-children, often by family members, and marital rape. Forms of violence related to custom, culture or religion, some of which are a source of cultural pride, including the practice of sati (self-immolation by widows), 5/ female genital mutilation and other initiation practices, widowhood rites and violence related to the custom of dowry were also revealed as risks to women.

7. Economic, social and political developments, some post-dating the adoption of the Forward-looking Strategies, led to the identification of other areas where women are at particular risk of violence. In some countries, structural adjustment policies have caused women to move from employment in the formal sector to that in the informal sector. There they are frequently subject to poor and unregulated working conditions and vulnerable to physical and sexual abuse. The increasing participation of women, predominantly from the South and Eastern Europe, in international labour migration, legal and illegal, the conditions of which are frequently unsatisfactory, has also provided a setting for physical and sexual abuse, 6/ with illegal immigrants most at risk. Poverty and lack of alternative employment has encouraged many women to turn to prostitution, both in their own countries and abroad. One of the results of HIV/AIDS has been increased sexual violence against girl-children, who are the subjects not only of victimization by individuals but also of forced prostitution and trafficking, as men seek younger and younger sexual partners so as to avoid infection. 7/

8. Ethnic, religious, communal and political conflicts have marked the end of the Cold War, and these conflicts have proved to be the setting for much female victimization. Female activists have been subject to physical and sexual violence, frequently by State agents, such as members of the military or the police. 8/ Women who are detained have been abused, most often sexually, by prison officers, the police and the military. During armed conflict, women have been the victims of terrorism and specific targets for rape and other sexual assault. Clear evidence exists suggesting that sexual abuse by soldiers is widespread and that rape, sexual slavery and forced pregnancy are used systematically in some conflicts. 9/ Most women who are subject to violence during wars take no active part in the conflict, but their abuse, which is very often sexual, is a deliberate tactic to intimidate or undermine the "enemy" and often aims to inflict deep and lasting damage on entire communities. Frequently, like women in detention, women subjected to violence in conflict situations are abused because they happen to be the wives, mothers, daughters or

sisters of the men the authorities cannot capture. These women become substitutes for the men in their families, with soldiers or governmental agents victimizing them in order to shame their male relatives or to coerce them into surrendering. Many women who are abused during conflicts, moreover, are often from the most marginalized and vulnerable sectors of society, such as indigenous or peasant women, 10/ refugees or displaced women.

9. Conflicts, political and economic insecurity, and environmental degradation have resulted in large refugee flows, with women forming the bulk of the refugee population. Refugee women and girls, particularly those with inadequate documentation or who are single and unaccompanied, are vulnerable to physical and sexual abuse during flight, on arrival in refugee camps and in the country of ultimate settlement. 11/ Perpetrators of such violence include pirates, border guards, and army and resistance units, as well as male refugees. 12/ Systematic sexual violence against women and girls, in the context of armed conflict and otherwise, and the sexual victimization of individual women is one of the major causes of internal displacement and the decision to seek asylum abroad. 13/

10. In sum, the focus on violence against women since the formulation of the Forward-looking Strategies has shown that women are subjected to three main forms of violence: physical abuse, sexual abuse, and psychological abuse. They are at risk of these abuses in all settings and contexts. The major site of violence against women is the family - where physical, sexual and psychological violence is a risk factor for girls and women throughout their lives and even from before birth. The community not only constitutes a site of violence against women but also supports aspects of the family which make it the major site of victimization for women. So also, the State constitutes a site of violence against women when, for example, it condones or tolerates the rape and torture of women in detention.

11. The Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies, in the areas of special concern, identify gender-specific violence as a form of abuse of women. Evidence suggests that men and women experience violence differently. Women, irrespective of context, are at much greater risk of sexual violence than men, and the harm caused by violence is usually determined by their sex. The violence is often motivated by gender concerns, since violence is often used to enforce male power. As a result, violence is increasingly being recognized as linked to the social, economic and political inequality that women experience as part of their daily lives while, at the same time, reinforcing that inequality.

2. Action at the international level

12. Until the beginning of the 1990s international action on violence against women concentrated on the family. However, in response to growing claims by women for equality in all areas, the issue of violence has broadened, to address other forms of violence.

13. Thus, although the focus of the work of the United Nations in the field of violence against women has been on the domestic sphere, violence against women in other contexts has also been acknowledged. The Economic and Social Council

has adopted, on the recommendation of the Commission on the Status of Women, several resolutions that relate to violence against detained women which is specific to their sex 14/ and has requested the Secretary-General to compile reports on this subject. 15/ The General Assembly has adopted two resolutions on violence against women migrant workers. 16/ The issue of female genital mutilation has been considered by the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, 17/ the Sub-Commission 18/ and Commission on Human Rights 19/ and the Working Group on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children. 20/ Forced prostitution and trafficking in women has been the concern of the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, which in 1991 elaborated the Programme of Action for the Prevention of Traffic in Persons and the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Women, which has been endorsed by the Subcommission and the Commission on Human Rights. 21/ Specialized agencies of the United Nations, including the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), and UNIFEM, part of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), have also addressed the question of violence against women. The UNHCR Executive Committee has adopted a number of resolutions concerning violence against refugee women 22/ and in 1990 adopted the Policy on Refugee Women. General guidelines have been developed by UNHCR to help organizations working with refugees to ensure that women are protected against manipulation, exploitation and sexual and physical abuse and that they are able to benefit from protection and assistance programmes without discrimination, 23/ while specific guidelines concerning the prevention of and response to sexual violence among refugees have just been completed. UNIFEM has linked the various forms of violence against women to development. 24/

14. Coordination of the work of the United Nations and its specialized agencies with respect to the problem was one of the first factors contributing to this shift in approach, as was the emergence of violence against women as a priority for United Nations bodies dealing with women's issues, including the Commission on the Status of Women and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. 25/

15. The Commission on the Status of Women adopted a number of recommendations regarding violence against women, leading, inter alia, to the adoption of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women. 26/

16. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women was elaborated by the Commission on the Status of Women prior to the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women, held in Copenhagen in 1980. The terms of the treaty bind States Parties to condemning discrimination against women in all its forms and to taking immediate and appropriate steps, in public and private life, to eliminate such discrimination. Although the obligation to eliminate discrimination against women imposed by the treaty is broad, encompassing "discrimination in all its forms", part II of the Convention addresses particular areas of discrimination. At no point does the Convention specifically mention violence against women, although article 6 obliges States Parties to take "all appropriate measures, including legislation, to suppress all forms of traffic in women and exploitation of prostitution of women".

17. The substantive work of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women coincided with the revelation of the endemic nature of violence

against women and the identification of this violence as related to the inequality of women with men. The absence of the mention of violence against women in the terms of the Convention encouraged States Parties to regard the issue, if they considered it at all, as outside their international treaty obligations. The Committee, concerned, first, that States Parties frequently did not include information with respect to the problem in their treaty reports, thereby indicating that violence against women was not regarded as an issue of inequality and, secondly, that States Parties might justify inaction because of the silence of the Convention on the matter, adopted, at its eighth session in 1989, general recommendation 12. Recommendation 12 suggested that articles 2, 5, 11, 12 and 16 required States Parties to act to protect women against violence of any kind in the family, the workplace or in any other area of social life and that States Parties report on legislative and other measures that have been taken to address violence against women, to protect the victims by providing support services and to compile statistics on incidence and victims. The following year, the Committee adopted general recommendation 14, concerned with female circumcision and other traditional practices harmful to the health of women. This recommendation suggested various strategies, predominantly of an educational nature, that States Parties might take to eradicate, specifically, female circumcision.

18. General recommendations 12 and 14 were tentative steps by the Committee to relate violence against women to discrimination and its elimination. In 1992, at its eleventh session, the Committee formulated the far more comprehensive general recommendation 19, which specifically categorized gender-based violence, which it defined as violence that is directed against a women because she is a women or that affects women disproportionately, as a form of discrimination that supports other forms of discrimination and, accordingly, as a breach of the general obligations of the Convention. Unlike general recommendations 12 and 14, general recommendation 19 firmly places gender-based violence within the rubric of human rights and fundamental freedoms and makes clear that the Convention obliges States Parties to eliminate violence perpetrated by public authorities and by private persons, organizations or enterprises. The general recommendation, further, elaborates programmatic measures States Parties should employ to address various manifestations of gender-based violence.

19. Prioritization by the Committee of the issue of gender-based violence, particularly in general recommendation 19, was informed by the second factor that led to the broadening of the issue of violence against women within the United Nations namely - the categorization of violence against women, because of its scale and gender dimension, as an issue of human rights. In order to concretize this categorization and because international and regional human rights instruments and mechanisms, although implicitly concerned with gender-based violence, did not explicitly relate to the issue and had, in general terms, not been interpreted as concerned with it, the Commission on the Status of Women recommended the formulation of an international instrument on violence against women.

20. The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, the result of the Commission's recommendation, locates violence against women within the framework of violation of human rights obligations, inequality and discrimination and sets out strategies that member States and the organs and

specialized agencies of the United Nations should employ to eliminate its occurrence. The Declaration's adoption was facilitated by the recognition by the World Conference on Human Rights, six months earlier, of the egregious nature of violence against women and the human rights dimensions of the problem. 27/ Further analysis of the issue within this framework occurred in October 1993 at the Expert Group Meeting on Measures to Eradicate Violence against Women, convened by the Division for the Advancement of Women as part of the preparation of a priority theme for the Commission on the Status of Women. The recommendations were made with respect to human rights, law and justice, development, health and education and peace, peace-keeping, emergencies and conflict. 28/

21. The final step towards the broadening of the issue within the United Nations occurred in March 1994, when the United Nations Commission on Human Rights condemned all acts of gender-based violence against women and appointed a special rapporteur on violence against women 29/ to seek and receive information on violence against women, its causes and consequences; recommend measures at the national regional and international levels to eliminate violence against women; work with other mechanisms of the Commission on Human Rights and the Commission on the Status of Women and to report to the next session of the Commission on Human Rights.

3. Existing strategies to confront violence against women

22. Coinciding with the identification of violence against women as gender-based, policy has broadened, and the problem has come to be considered a matter of human rights and a dimension of discrimination between women and men. Basically, at all levels, strategies fall into three broad categories: raising awareness of the various forms of violence against women, advocating legal change, and providing services for victims.

a. International level

23. Action at the international level with respect to violence against women has included the establishment of policy, the formulation of recommendations for member States and United Nations activity.

24. Comprehensive recommendations relating to violence against women in the family, incorporating very specific suggestions for legal reform, with a concentration on a criminal justice approach to domestic violence, the role and training of the police, prosecutors and the health sector, social and resource support for victims and the compilation of research and data were made by the (1986) Expert Group on Violence in the Family, with special Emphasis on its Effects on Women. Important recommendations were also made by the Group with regard to public awareness of violence against women, education at all levels and in all forms,and the elimination of images in education and the media entrenching the subordination and violation of women. Similar recommendations were made in the general recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women with regard to family violence. As has been noted, general recommendation 19 was drawn more widely than the two earlier recommendations on violence against women and thus included suggestions relating

to trafficking and sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, female circumcision and violence against rural women and domestic workers.

25. Strategies elaborated in the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women contain recommendations found in existing United Nations documents. Thus, recalling paragraph 258 of the Forward-looking Strategies, States are urged to consider the development of national plans of action to promote the protection of women against any form of violence and, if appropriate, cooperate with non-governmental organizations in that regard, entrench appropriate legal provisions, introduce training for relevant sectors, address issues of education and the portrayal of images of women, promote research and adopt measures directed to the elimination of violence against women who are especially vulnerable to violence. Unusually, however, the Declaration specifically addresses the organs and specialized agencies of the United Nations. They are requested to promote awareness of the issue and encourage coordination within the Organization with respect to efforts to eliminate gender-based violence.

26. It is the clear categorization by the Declaration of gender-based violence against women as both an issue of human rights and of discrimination, however, which establishes the framework for the development of future strategies at the international level. Within the Declaration itself, States are urged to condemn violence against women and refrain from invoking custom, tradition or religion to avoid this obligation. States are also urged to refrain from engaging in violence against women and to exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate and punish acts of violence against women, whether perpetrated in the public or private sphere. This language not only sets strategic objectives for member States but encourages the interpretation of existing international standards and methods of implementation so as to address the issue of violence against women.

b. National level

27. Measures that have been introduced at the national level to confront violence against women fall into three broad categories: service and support provision, substantive and procedural law reform, and training and education for specific groups as well as for the general public.

28. Not all countries have introduced measures in this context, but most have provided information in their national reports. Where they have done so, it has usually been as a result of advocacy and activism by women's non-governmental organizations. Accordingly, the focus of the measures and their level of development reflect the primary focus of attention of such non-governmental organizations. Until very recently, the primary focus of activist attention in individual countries was violence against women which occurs in the private sphere. Thus, sexual assault generally and all forms of violence against women in the family received primary attention and, accordingly, at the national level measures in those contexts were most developed. Sexual harassment in the workplace and elsewhere had also attracted attention, as had particular forms of violence based on culture, tradition or religion. Since the beginning of the decade, and particularly with the identification of gender-based violence against women as an issue of human rights, activist attention has expanded to encompass violence against women in the public sphere. Although activism

relating to violence against women in this setting has largely been devoted to achieving better application of extant international standards and procedures of implementation in this context, in some countries specific measures have been introduced which relate to violence against women in this sphere.

29. Existing national measures to confront violence against women do not approach the various manifestations of such violence as the result of a uniform structural cause but, rather, address each form of violence separately, generally in accordance with where the violence occurs. Thus, different measures have been employed to address violence in the family, the community and elsewhere. Government measures have been initiated to confront a number of forms of violence against women: violence against women in the household; sexual harassment; sexual assault; violence related to tradition and culture; and violence perpetrated against women in the public sphere. Where each is concerned, the text will examine legal approaches, service provisions, and the research, training and educational measures that have been utilized.

30. Where all forms of violence against women are concerned, national strategies have concentrated predominantly on legal and service measures with, to a lesser extent, attention being paid to sector-specific and public-education programmes or campaigns which address values, attitudes and actions related to gender violence. In the main, it has been unusual for countries to implement an integrated, holistic response to gender-based violence against women. Thus, in general, responses have been reactive, with the protection of the victim and the punishment of the perpetrator as their primary concerns. Exceptional in this regard are Australia and Canada where some attempt has been made to take a comprehensive approach to violence against women. In Australia, a National Committee on Violence Against Women, which has formulated a national strategy with respect to violence against women has been established, 30/ and Canada has set up the Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, which has formulated a national action plan. 31/

31. Responses have often been law-centred, predominantly concerned with law reform. However, many laws are based on a model of gender neutrality in what is, in fact, a gender-specific area, and the laws do not take account of the reality of victimization and the systemic inequalities in society. Very often the laws are still based on outdated sexual stereotypes and result in unfair and unequal treatment of women.

32. For each type of measure chosen, there has to be a distinct evaluation. What has appeared in national legal systems is a broader definition of what is considered physical or sexual violence against women. The national reports suggest that most countries have provisions in their constitutions or in their legislation about violence in the family or in terms of sexual assault.

33. The central question that has emerged in the evolution of strategies to confront the problem is whether the penal or criminal justice system is appropriate for the management of violence against women. In some cases, the criminal law was believed to be inappropriate when Governments reported their intention to undertake reforms of legislation. In other cases, reports stressed the need to create or enlarge facilities for victims, an approach that dominated the measures taken. However, a number of countries noted that while domestic

violence takes place in the family and occurs among intimates, it is in fact criminal conduct and should not be treated differently from such conduct in other contexts. In a few countries, this has led to the development of spouse-abuse statutes.

34. Those countries that have chosen to stress the criminal nature of domestic abuse have recognized the central role of the police in the management of the issue. They have recognized, further, that the police have been traditionally reluctant to intervene in such cases and have sought to introduce strategies to encourage their intervention. The strategies have included legal measures, such as the clarification of police powers of entry, arrest and bail procedures in cases of domestic violence; legislation that compels women to give evidence against their abusive spouses; the introduction of presumptive arrest and charging policies; police training and support services.

35. All countries, including those that have not considered the question of domestic violence in any sustained fashion, have legal measures, such as criminal and tortious sanction, which are applicable to cases of assault generally and are therefore, theoretically, available in cases of domestic assault. In general, however, crimes, torts or delicts are not defined so as to encompass emotional or psychological harms and in many countries unwanted sexual acts by a husband on his wife do not amount to crimes. Further, few countries draw a distinction between violence against women and men in their criminal and civil codes, and very few have established specific offences relating to violence which occurs in the family or between family members. The sex of the victim and the relationship between the victim and the offender sometimes do allow for the introduction of certain defences, such as the "honour defence", which, to a certain extent, may excuse crimes which occur between intimates or affect sentence.

36. All countries, as reflected in their period reports to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, provide matrimonial relief, such as divorce or judicial separation, for those who are treated with violence by their spouses. These remedies have proven, in general terms, to be inadequate in the context of domestic violence. In most countries, general criminal remedies are not applied unless the violence suffered is particularly severe, and even where they are applied, the criminal law, in its usual form, does not cater for the particular issues that arise in the case of domestic assault. Matrimonial relief, although providing a remedy for some, is clearly available only to those who are married and even in such cases may not be desired by the victim, who, in general terms, wishes the violence, rather than the relationship, to be brought to an end.

37. Some countries have introduced special legal approaches to confront domestic violence. Some have introduced special criminal sanctions which apply in the domestic context. In general, however, special legal approaches to domestic violence have been in the context of the civil, rather than the criminal, law and have developed from two existing legal remedies: the breach of the peace procedure, and the injunction.

38. In most countries, there is a procedure whereby complaints can be made to a magistrate or justice that violence has taken place or has been threatened, and

the violent party is then requested to enter into an undertaking, with or without a pledge of money, to keep the peace or be of good behaviour. If the undertaking is breached, the offender forfeits a specified sum of money or is imprisoned. The process is criminal, but the standard of proof is lower. In its general form, this remedy has some potential for the victim of domestic assault, but it does present some problems, not the least of which is the fact that enforcement of the remedy depends on a further court appearance, initiated by the victim or the police.

39. Some countries have modified and strengthened this procedure so that it is more useful in the context of domestic violence, while others have used it as the inspiration for remedies, usually known as "protection orders", which apply specifically to such violence. In general terms, the remedy developed from the procedure allows for a court order, obtained on the balance of probabilities, which can protect the victim from further attacks or harassment.

40. A number of countries have chosen to concentrate on the civil, rather than the criminal, law to provide victims of domestic assault with remedy. In general terms, these countries have developed existing injunction or interdict proceedings. Usually an injunction or interdict is available only as a remedy incidental to a principal cause of action - for example, divorce, nullity or judicial separation - and, although seeking to provide a victim of domestic violence with relief, some countries continue to limit access to the remedy in this way. In others, however, a victim of domestic violence is able to apply for injunctive relief independently of any other legal action. Usually, the relief available is of two varieties: an order prohibiting the offender from molesting or harassing the victim, and an order excluding or evicting the offender from a part or all of the matrimonial home or the area in which the home is situated. The orders are usually supported by a provision entitling the police to arrest the offender, without warrant, if he breaches the order.

41. In most countries, criminal and civil laws, although of various levels of sophistication, to protect women who are the victims of domestic violence are technically in place. This is important because such laws not only provide individual victims with remedies, should they choose to take advantage of them, but also indicate clearly that a country does not tolerate domestic assault. Indeed, all Governments should be encouraged to introduce clear, accessible and well integrated legal provisions, appropriate to the particular country situation, in this context.

42. Certainly, certain sectors have always been aware of the existence of violence, but countries have been slow to provide services for victims, offenders and their families. Although the law is usually the last resort for victims of domestic assault, reached only after others have proved to be unhelpful, Governments have chosen to concentrate on legal reform.

43. In general terms, the response of the health and welfare sectors has been insufficient to deal with violence. Professionals in these sectors, usually uneducated in the dynamics of domestic assault, have chosen to concentrate on the victim, rather than the offender, as the key to their response. In general, both sectors have looked at such violence as an individual, rather than

structural, problem and have stressed the importance of the maintenance of the family.

44. Many national reports indicate that services for victims of domestic violence have been introduced not because of governmental initiatives but rather as a result of activity by individual women or groups of women. In general, however, once services have been put in place by the efforts of such women, Governments have stepped in and either taken over such services or introduced services of their own, modelled on those introduced by the voluntary sector.

45. Shelter provision has proven to be the most important service for victims of domestic violence. Shelters, which were originally conceived as advice centres for women at risk and ultimately developed to provide residential accommodation for them and their children, exist in many countries. In countries where the Government has adopted the shelter model, specific shelters are often established for different groups of women, including immigrant women, women with disabilities, aboriginal women. In general, shelter facilities usually have inadequate funding for the service requirements, so that they are inadequate in number, oversubscribed and understaffed.

46. Other services that exist for victims of domestic assault include toll-free advice lines, counselling services and advice centres.

47. Some Governments have chosen to implement programmes for offenders. Like shelters for battered women, many of these programmes began as community-based responses to the problem, and many were linked to shelters. In certain cases they are part of diversion schemes or a court sentence. These schemes are new, take various models, and have as yet to be analysed for effectiveness. As such, they should be approached cautiously.

48. Government-funded and -sponsored research into the various aspects of violence against women in the family is well developed in some countries, some going so far as to have information clearing-houses on the subject. In most, however, research has not progressed beyond the rudimentary.

49. A number of countries have initiated training programmes for those involved in domestic violence. Most of the programmes focus on the police, regarded as the front line of response. The programmes vary in duration, scope and target group, and little information about them was provided in the reports. Few countries offer the police comprehensive and in-depth training in the dynamics of domestic violence, the legal responses available and the services available for the victims. Police in most countries do not receive any training in this area.

50. Some countries have recognized that domestic violence is the result of social norms and values that provide stereotypical roles for men and women and have concluded that these views can best be addressed by formal and informal education. Accordingly, in some countries, the subject of family violence and peaceful methods of conflict resolution form part of the primary and secondary curriculum.

51. Many countries have relied on informal education strategies, both to inform women of their legal rights, available options and support systems and to convey to both women and men that family violence is to be deplored. Such strategies have included poster campaigns, booklets, videos, television and radio advertising and folk theatre.

(i) Sexual harassment

52. Few countries reported on sexual harassment. In those that did, different remedies are applied, depending upon whether it occurs in the street or in the workplace.

53. Most countries fail to provide remedies for harassment falling short of rape, sexual assault, indecent assault or common assault which occurs outside the workplace. In exceptional cases, however, specific legislation prohibits sexually offensive behaviour, which is variously described as insulting the modesty of a woman, "eye-teasing" or "kerb-crawling".

54. A number of countries have become aware of the importance of sexual harassment in the workplace and educational institutions and the implications that such harassment can have for the individual woman and the organization. These countries have, therefore, allowed women who have been subject to such victimization to seek remedies under legislation pertaining to employment, such as sex discrimination or equal opportunities statutes, concluding that harassment in the workplace amounts to less favourable treatment on the grounds of sex. Still others have enacted specific legislation prohibiting sexual harassment in employment, the provision of goods and services, and educational institutions, and provide remedies where such harassment occurs.

55. Although the legislative remedies are broadly similar in approach, some statutes are more effective than others, having wider definitions of harassment, extending coverage to contract and commission agents, allowing representative actions by unions and fixing employers with vicarious liability for the harassment of their employees.

56. In general, governmental measures to prevent sexual harassment have been confined to the introduction of legislation, campaigning around and publicizing the issue being left to the initiative of trade unions, worker's associations and private organizations. A number of Governments have, however, produced protocols or guides indicating how sexual harassment can be eliminated in both governmental and non-governmental institutions. A limited number of Governments, such as New Zealand, have drafted standard form contracts, used when governmental contracts are concluded, which contain clauses forbidding harassment.

57. Some governmental bodies have increased awareness of sexual harassment, its serious short- and long-term implications and the measures that can be used to confront it by educational strategies. These have included the production of pamphlets, protocols and advertisements. In one country, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission conducted a poster, magazine and advertising campaign, which included a toll-free complaint line, aimed at young women in vulnerable occupations. The campaign and its effects are continuing.

(ii) Sexual assault

58. All countries criminally sanction sexual offenses against women. Although there has been significant focus on the reform of the substantive law of sexual assault, evaluations of legislative reforms reveal that most women place more significance on reform of evidentiary and procedural aspects of this area of the law. Thus, modifications of the requirement of fresh complaint, corroboration and rules allowing introduction of evidence of the past sexual history of complainants have been welcomed as significantly ameliorating the ordeal and limiting the humiliation that a complainant endures, both in the courtroom and before. Other measures, which have included provisions providing complainants with anonymity, court procedures which hide their identity and deny the offender bail or at least make the complainant aware of where the offender is, have also been enthusiastically received.

59. Some countries - e.g., Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom - have criminal injury compensation schemes entitling victims of sexual assault to compensation by the State.

60. Support and services for victims of sexual assault have, as in the case of domestic violence, usually been initiated by individual women and women's groups. As with domestic violence, the models used have often been adopted by government at a later stage.

61. In many countries rape crisis services, providing toll-free advice lines, advice services and accommodation for women who are the victims of sexual assault, exist. Some are run by women's groups with no support from government, others are operated by a combination of such a group and government, and some are operated by government. Some operate independently, others cooperate with the police, and some are integrated formally with the police.

62. In most countries the traditional sexual assault reception agencies are police stations. In general terms, little attention has been paid to the singular ordeal that a rape complainant endures, and most stations are not equipped to alleviate this. Some, however, have taken account of the particular needs of sexual assault complainants and offer a multidisciplinary approach to the complaints, often cooperating with hospitals or special clinics. In some countries, further, police have introduced special examination rooms, away from the station, to render the ordeal of the victim as inoffensive as possible.

63. Victims of sexual assault are usually ashamed, guilty and afraid of how people will react to them. Many are humiliated, ridiculed, scorned and stigmatized by police and other workers and treated with hostility and suspicion by their family and friends.

64. The negative response to the victim of rape stems from attitudes towards women, rape victims and rape which are the result of myth and prejudice. Women are believed to provoke sexual assault by the way they dress, where they go, the way they move and behave. They are considered to be responsible for their own protection and must ensure that they do not arouse male sexuality.

65. Evidence from many countries suggests that the police are particularly at risk of being misinformed by these stereotypes. They are thus frequently suspicious of complainants, particularly in cases where there is no obvious sign of injury, the offender is known to the complainant, the complainant delays reporting her assault or appears calm and unemotional. If the complainant is perceived to be morally dubious - for example, if she is sexually experienced - her allegation may be doubted.

66. Police suspicion may manifest itself in various ways: the complainant may be totally disbelieved and discouraged from pursuing her complaint; the investigation may be conducted in such a way as to test her story - insensitive, bullying interrogation may take place, for example, involving a series of officers and a medical examination in unpleasant or threatening circumstances; the complainant may be kept uninformed of the progress of the investigation.

67. Insensitive police procedures not only add to the ordeal of the complainant but obstruct acquisition of the best evidence and militate against conviction of offenders.

68. In most countries, police officers receive basic training in the law and practice relating to sexual assault. However, this training is usually brief and underresourced. Some countries have recognized the importance of training and education in this context and have introduced specific training and education at various levels. Most of this training has been in methods of obtaining the best evidence for conviction and has thus been technical, but some has included attitude training and sensitization. Some countries have employed kits and protocols which the investigating officer is directed to use in cases of complaints of sexual assault; they ensure that officers are meticulous in their collection of evidence and also direct their inquiries sensitively.

69. Police officers are not the only officials who need to be educated in the dynamics of sexual assault. Prosecutors, defenders and judges as well as the general public require such training. Unfortunately, although some countries do conduct specific training on sexual assault for lawyers and judges, they have not developed as much of it as in the area of domestic violence. Again, although poster and advertising campaigns around the issues of domestic violence and sexual harassment have been conducted in many countries, sexual assault has not received the publicity it warrants.

(iii) Violence related to tradition and custom

70. In a number of countries, women are subjected to violent or harmful treatment because of practices which are regarded as traditional, customary or prescribed by religion. Four such practices are: violence related to dowry, widowhood rites, sati and female circumcision.

71. In all four instances legal strategies have been introduced to criminalize the practice, in the hope that this will lead to its eradication. However, here more than in other contexts where women are the subject of abuse, the law alone cannot be relied on to change practices which are rooted deeply in tradition and culture and which, to a certain extent, are defended by both women and men, despite the fact that they have patently harmful consequences.

72. Harmful traditional and customary practices will be eradicated only when there is fundamental societal change, which will occur with attitudinal change at all levels. This sort of change can be achieved only with a combination of short-term and long-term measures aimed at the particular practice and at the cause of the practice: inequality. Such measures include formal and informal education, effective use of media and clear commitment from government, which must be prepared not only to condemn such practices legislatively but also to ensure that the legislation is implemented in good faith.

73. In a few instances, educational campaigns sought to demonstrate the danger inherent in a practice and change both men's and women's attitudes to it. Such campaigns directed at women performing, for example, circumcision, have not been as focused as those to stop dowry-related violence, but in those countries where the practice is customary, poster campaigns and training modules for service providers have been introduced. These have aimed at the transformation of the social, religious and cultural bases of the practice. Further, in a number of these countries, high-level members of government have been prepared to make statements condemning the practice, drawing attention to the health risks to girls and women which accompanies it.

4. Effects of armed or other kinds of conflict on women

74. The provisions of the Strategies under the theme of Peace (paras. 232-262) reflect the stage of governmental discussion on the subject in the mid-1980s, covering the climate of "cold war", the lack of clear focus on the gender difference in approaches to such matters as security, disarmament, conflict resolution, and the situation of women and children in the occupied Palestinian territories, under apartheid and in areas of armed conflict. The areas described in the Strategies and discussed during and after the Nairobi Conference by intergovernmental bodies, were often viewed as an extension of the political confrontation between East and West over such issues as disarmament, armed conflict, the problems of the Middle East and apartheid rather than an attempt to reflect thoroughly the women's perspective with regard to those issues. There were, however, some themes, such as the role of women in education for peace, in peace research, in decision-making and in non-governmental activities which had more potential for reflecting women's contributions and perspectives and which were less politicized.

75. The same spirit was reflected in the listing of the main obstacles to peace, which affect particularly the advancement of women, which included international tension and violations of the Charter of the United Nations; the arms race, in particular, the nuclear arms race; armed conflict; external domination; foreign occupation; acquisition of land by force; aggression; imperialism; colonialism and neo-colonialism; racism; apartheid; gross violations of human rights; terrorism; repression; the disappearance of persons; and discrimination on the basis of sex. Other obstacles listed were historically established hostile attitudes; ignorance and bigotry between countries, ethnic groups, races, sexes, and socio-economic groups and lack of tolerance for different cultures and traditions; poverty; tension in international economic and political relations; the spread of the arms race; and violation of the principle of justice.

76. At the time of the Nairobi Conference, the different approaches of women's non-governmental organizations were articulated in feminist publications and research. Their understanding of peace, rejection of violence in all its forms, holistic approach to peace, and invisible contribution to the promotion of more conciliatory and peaceful attitudes were well established in all parts of the world (although most advanced in North America and Western Europe). The views and activities of women were, in general, in opposition to those of Governments and the "official" line of thinking. They were also very diversified, as demonstrated at the "Peace Tent" at the Non-governmental Forum, parallel to the Nairobi Conference.

77. Although in the mid 1980s peace-related discourse and activities on the part of non-governmental organizations and of Governments remained separate, non-governmental research and literature had an impact on governmental attitudes. In the Strategies, the issue of violence against women was for the first time placed under the theme of Peace, thus affirming the feminist claim that violence in all its forms and at all levels has the same roots and that there is an obvious connection between violence against women and war-related violence. In paragraph 13 of the Strategies, the Conference adopted a broad definition of peace, reflecting the feminist view that

> "The full and effective promotion of women's rights can best occur in conditions of international peace and security where relations among States are based on the respect for the legitimate rights of all nations, great and small, and peoples to self-determination, independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and the right to live in peace within their national borders.
>
> ...
>
> "Peace includes not only the absence of war, violence and hostilities at the national and international levels but also the enjoyment of economic and social justice, equality and the entire range of human rights and fundamental freedoms within the society.
>
> ...
>
> "It also embraces the whole range of actions reflected in concerns for security and implicit assumptions of trust between nations, social groups and individuals. It represents goodwill towards others and promotes respect for life while protecting freedom, human rights and the dignity of peoples and of individuals. Peace cannot be realized under conditions of economic and sexual inequality, denial of basic human rights and fundamental freedoms, deliberate exploitation of large sectors of the population, unequal development of countries, and exploitative economic relations. Without peace and stability there can be no development. Peace and development are interrelated and mutually reinforcing.
>
> ...
>
> "Peace is promoted by equality of the sexes, economic equality and the universal enjoyment of basic human rights and fundamental freedoms. Its

enjoyment by all requires that women be enabled to exercise their right to participate on an equal footing with men in all spheres of the political, economic and social life of their respective countries, particularly in the decision-making process, while exercising their right to freedom of opinion, expression, information and association in the promotion of international peace and cooperation."

78. Other themes included in the Strategies, such as the participation of women in decision-making in the areas of peace, disarmament and security; the participation of women in international activities as representatives of their countries at international meetings, including those of the United Nations and regional bodies; the participation of women in the diplomatic service of their countries; and the employment of women by international organizations, including the United Nations system have become increasingly important. With the decreasing tension between East and West and the increasing number of States Parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the lack of progress on the implementation of its articles 7 and 8 related to the participation of women in the political arena at the national and international level, becomes striking.

79. The view that there could be no increase in the participation of women in peace, security, and conflict-resolution areas until the enormous gap between the de jure and the de facto situation of women in decision-making is bridged is generally recognized, and since 1990, the participation of women in decision-making has become one of the most visible issues under the theme of Peace. Although the practical progress has been very slow, there is increased interest in addressing this issue, as reflected by numerous governmental discussions, expert group meetings and publications.

80. The 1990 review and appraisal cited certain fields, such as disarmament and multilateral diplomacy, which are crucial for the preservation of peace and yet in which women are highly underrepresented. For example, in the Talks on Mutual Reduction of Armed Forces and Associated Measures in Central Europe, which were held at Vienna, between 1975 and 1986, there were only 10 women in the 19 delegations. Half of them (five women out of 92 delegates, or 5 per cent) participated only at the end of the talks. In the permanent missions to the United Nations in 1989 women constituted 20 per cent of the diplomatic personnel. Thirty-six per cent (57 delegations) had no women on the staff at all. The highest percentage of women delegates were in the Latin American and the Caribbean region (39 per cent). The Western European and Others group had (26 per cent); Africa, 15 per cent; Asia and the Pacific, 12 per cent; and Eastern Europe, 4 per cent. The representation of women in the First Committee of the General Assembly, which deals with disarmament and international security in the period 1985-1988 was 7.9 per cent. The highest representation was from Latin America and the Caribbean - 16.3 per cent. These international levels reflect the situations at the national levels. The participation of women is lowest in decision-making in the area of defence.

81. Fewer than one third of those developing countries providing national reports in 1990 indicated that specific measures had been taken for increasing women's active participation in the area of peace. Some of those countries called attention to their distribution of information on peace matters, support

to women's participation in peace-related activities and conferences, and the importance of women's activities in this area. A few countries mentioned the importance of national machinery in this respect. Several developed countries mentioned their efforts to increase the participation of women in senior positions in international organizations. They also mentioned valuable work by non-governmental organizations in this respect, involving support to South Africa, Central America and Palestine; disarmament; support to refugees; peace marches; support to women in developing countries; and protests against nuclear build-up.

82. Most developing and several developed countries reported on the role of women in education for peace and the measures undertaken by the Governments to increase and support this role, by means of the dissemination of information; participation in conferences and meetings; integration of the subjects of peace, cooperation, tolerance, sexual equality, into school curricula; promotion of peace culture and art; strengthening of education for peace in the family; training in the resolution of conflicts; and strengthening of human rights and liberties. Some countries produced special material on peace issues. Peace education was considered one of the main areas of activity of women's organizations. Several countries mentioned their support to peace research through the designation of funds and cooperation with the United Nations system.

83. In the review and appraisal, the main obstacles mentioned to the participation of women in peace-related activities were military expenditure and direction of funds for military purposes; armed conflict; low level of education; insufficient communication; economic conditions, and the large portion of the world's women affected by regional conflicts and violence against women.

84. In resolution 1990/15, the Economic and Social Council noted, in conclusions arising from the first review and appraisal of the implementation of the Nairobi Strategies, that:

> "22. Despite the progress made in some areas, international, regional and national conflicts persist, and women continue to number among their main victims. At the same time, women are no more prominent among those making decisions on conflicts than in the past.
>
> "Recommendation XX. Governments should be encouraged to increase the participation of women in the peace process at the decision-making level, including them as part of delegations to negotiate international agreements relating to peace and disarmament and establishing a target for the number of women participating in such delegations.
>
> "The United Nations and the international non-governmental organizations concerned should continue to monitor and support greater involvement of women in the peace process."

85. Of the 63 national reports that were analysed for this document, only 34 addressed, sometimes in a very general way, the issues of women and peace. They focused on the situation of refugee women, the participation of women in the

military and police force and the participation of women in non-governmental activities related to peace.

5. Women and peace in the post-cold war period

86. With the end of the "cold war", the attempts to establish democracy, a market economy and international cooperation throughout the world have reduced the interest of some Governments in the issue of women and peace. Other Governments, however, have focused on the emerging situation and women's roles in it, pointing to the linkage between the participation of women in all spheres of life as full citizens, including the peace process, and the prospects of building new, democratic societies; women's participation in national and international decision-making related to peace; and women's participation in conflict resolution. With the concept of a new international world order, which should be formed and guarded in the future by an international peace force under the auspices of the United Nations, women's new roles came into discussion. Besides traditional peace-keeping roles, women should perform various other functions, in the international police and military, as peacemakers and negotiators of peace settlements, and as supervisors of elections, national reconciliation and democratization.

87. Similar changes of focus and searches for new identities characterized all spheres of peace-related activities at the non-governmental level, including women's organizations, research institutions and female researchers. It seems that, at this level, increasing attention and importance is being attached to the participation of women in all aspects of peace-keeping, negotiation and peace-making, including decision-making. The fact that women have been excluded from those areas and have suffered the consequences of violent international and domestic conflicts and the destruction and waste of human and material resources is now being actively addressed by women.

88. Women's long participation in non-governmental activities related to peace has been fruitful to them in organizing demonstrations and peace education and in offering alternatives to a militarized society. The focus has been on avoiding or ending violence, which has been almost exclusively perpetrated by men. Women peace researchers have shown the common roots of all forms of violence, from family and personal violence to war, and have indicated that there can be no real peace without the elimination of all forms of discrimination and oppression. They have advocated participatory democracy, the preservation of a healthy environment, the elimination of instruments of war, ensuring the prevalence of values and attitudes for peace, and developing a new type of interpersonal and international relations based on partnership and tolerance.

89. Another issue newly on the agenda, in the new context, is war-related violence and the suffering of women. Attention was given to the situation of women and children in armed conflict and the obligation of parties to observe all the rules outlined in the Hague and the Geneva Conventions and in the Additional Protocols to the Geneva Conventions. Another area under the topic of women and peace was the situation of refugee women, resulting in most cases from

armed conflicts - their legal status; vulnerability to abuse, violence and all forms of discrimination; and means of assistance.

90. In certain recent armed conflicts in different parts of the world, various forms of direct violence were used against women, including rape and forced prostitution. They were used as a "weapon", to humiliate. The most extensive gender-related violence against women was reported in the former Yugoslavia. It obliged the international community to address the issue of violence against women during armed conflicts. The focus is on the necessity of creating an international mechanism that would make possible fast and prompt international investigation and court proceedings for the perpetrators, just as in all other cases of war crimes. On the other hand, it is felt that there should be more emphasis on the empowerment of women, which would enable them to have more say in decisions related to war or peace; reconciliation or violence, which would allow them to contribute to preventing such tragedies rather than becoming their victims. There should also be more effective mechanisms for assisting women victims of war-related violence to rebuild their confidence, strengthen their self-reliance and eliminate their victims' syndrome.

91. Thus, there was increasing understanding that women should play an equal part in the peace efforts defined in the Agenda for Peace - first, because their participation in such activities was their right as citizens of their countries; secondly, because there were reasons to believe that they would bring to those operations specific skills and abilities that otherwise would not be available.

92. Existing research indicates that, in order to have a substantive impact on decision-making in terms of content, priorities, style and working climate, the critical mass must be at least 30-35 per cent. Such a level of participation would enable a minority to influence the culture of the group. Women have achieved a critical mass at the national decision-making level in only a few countries, particularly the Nordic countries. When women in those countries acted in solidarity, they were able to have a visible impact on political decisions and the political culture. For example, they changed peoples' attitudes to female leaders and placed on the public agendas such issues as social support service, equality, health care, protection against violence and women's reproductive rights.

93. According to public opinion polls, surveys and other sources of information, in some countries of North America and Western Europe, women are less militaristic than men, more concerned with the preservation of peace, and more opposed to increased militarization or nuclear energy. Women more strongly support measures to protect the environment, help the economically disadvantaged, improve race relations, and regulate and control by law of various social vices. While most of the empirical studies came from developed countries, there are more and more indications that women in developing countries also made attempts to include women's issues on public agendas. For example, women's groups in Mexico have campaigned against rape and domestic violence; in India women organized the Chipko movement to secure a ban on felling trees and to replant the available land and manage it properly. In Kenya, the Green Belt Movement focused on planting trees, contributing significantly to the reduction of deforestation. Women's different political style has also been noted among female politicians at the local level. Whenever

women have joined the decision-making bodies in sufficient numbers, they have created a more collaborative atmosphere, characterized by mutual respect, independent of prevailing political differences, and have sought consensus or acceptance rather than a win-or-lose solution. They focused more on solving than discussing the problems. These approaches would be most useful with regard to peace and security matters at the national and international levels.

94. Seven countries reported on women's non-governmental activities related to peace. Two focused on activities related to national reconciliation in war-torn areas and in the neighbouring countries. They included peace campaigns, humanitarian work, assistance to refugees, and contacts between women emigrants and the women's groups in the country in order to contribute to the peace dialogue. One country reported on women's involvement in radio programmes for dialogue and peace in the warring countries (Ethiopia, Somalia). One country emphasized that women should be trained for future positions in the process of reconstruction and that United Nations agencies should take the lead in this respect. One country reported that due to a women's campaign, one of its provinces was declared a nuclear-free zone in 1992.

95. One country stressed the important role of national and international non-governmental organizations in increasing awareness of rural women and the important roles of women as peace makers at home, at the community level, and as teachers. Women performed those roles throughout their lifetimes participating in matrimonial, religious and governmental reconciliation.

96. One country focused on the significant role which women's non-governmental organizations played with regard to the development of self-reliance and the leadership capabilities of women; the promotion of the ideals of disarmament and human rights through various international initiatives, friendship associations, the active participation of women in international meetings and the global peace movement; building women's networks; citizen's diplomacy; and advocating peace. Women also worked, alone and with men, in many organizations and professional associations, addressing women's concerns related to disarmament, human rights, war crimes, rape, sexual violence and conflict resolution. In this way, women have had an impact on governmental policy relating to the moratorium on nuclear weapons and preventing the deployment of cruise missiles.

97. Reference was made to the gender gap in men's and women's attitudes to war and peace and to the substantial differences in view reflected by public opinion polls in relation to defence spending, social programmes and funding priorities. The tendency of women to form their own opinions and programmes on the new world order, legislation and development was noted. The issues on women's agendas included the destruction of nuclear weapons arsenals, reduction in the number other weapons world wide, ratification of all treaties related to the elimination of nuclear weapons and renewal of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, conversion of minds and States from military to peaceful pursuits, reallocation of resources from military to peaceful uses, peaceful conflict resolution, education for peace, reduction in violence, and protection of human rights of women.

a. Diplomacy

98. Six countries reported on women in diplomacy, providing some figures on the participation of women in the diplomatic service. It was emphasized by a few that women's participation in the foreign service did not match their high contribution to peace at the non-governmental level. One country pointed that there was an increase in the number of women ambassadors, but the figures remained very low - three or two. One country pointed to the significant increase in the number of women diplomats: 6 women out of 150 total in 1980; 23 out of 133 in 1985 and 1990; and 25 out of 106 in 1994. Reference was also made to the participation of women as members of delegations to national and international peace-related meetings, including United Nations bodies, such as the Security Council and on peace-keeping missions. Special reference was made to the three women out of five total, including the woman ambassador to Rwanda, participating in peace negotiations for Rwanda in 1993.

99. One country stated that its overall goal was that 20 per cent of its executive should be women by 1995, up from 11 per cent in 1994 and 7 per cent in 1985. Among ambassadors 4 per cent were women in 1985, 9 per cent in 1993. The distribution of posts was most equal within the Department for International Developmental Cooperation and the male-dominated political departments. The key missions (Washington, D.C., Tokyo, Moscow, London, Paris) were dominated by men. Women were highly represented as diplomats in administration (42 per cent, comparing to 28 per cent in 1985). Another country reported that among top-level executives, 6.7 per cent were women. By the end of 1991, 19.4 per cent of the foreign service employees were women, which was an improvement of 6.5 per cent over the period of a few years. In the field of development cooperation, only 11 per cent of employees in 1992 were women.

100. Two countries reported on specific measures under consideration to accelerate the promotion of women administrative officers and women candidates for United Nations posts, plans of action to change attitudes and habits, and analyses of equality problems in the ministries of foreign affairs.

6. Women in the military, police forces and peace-keeping

101. No systematic data exists on women in the military. The largest amount of data is held by the States members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Western European Union. Half of those countries have legislation and policies excluding women from combat, although women's service has been encouraged for the same length of time and the same pay and including the same training and discipline as that of men. Most rules permit pregnant women to remain in the service and provide for parental leave, but limit the rank that women can achieve. Differing rules seem, however, to have limited impact on participation rates. For example, in Canada, which has an egalitarian approach, women constitute only 12 per cent of the military; in the United States which prohibits women's service in combat, the figure is 11 per cent. In 5 of the countries the participation was 2-4 per cent; in 8 of the 15, it was negligible.

a. Women in the military

102. Research in 45 countries shows that in only 13 countries do women make up more than 10 per cent of the service members. In most countries women perform different functions. Even in countries where women can serve as regular members of a State military, there is usually a restriction on combat. Israel, where service is mandatory for women, is a case in point. In only a few countries is the combat role open - Belgium, Canada, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Venezuela and Zambia. A majority of women are not in combat units. In Canada, which recently removed all restrictions based on gender, women constituted 12 per cent of those in active duty and 20 per cent of the reserves, but a few are in combat specialities. The principal opening for women are in medical professions and clerical and administrative positions.

103. The accessibility of military service to women has rarely been reported by the States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Some countries - for example, Australia, Austria, Germany, New Zealand, and Thailand - have made reservations to various provisions of the Convention, including its articles 7 and 8 with regard to the participation of women in the military.

104. The participation of women in the military has been a controversial issue. Many men and women think that it is "men's business". The historical reservation of military roles to men is largely the result of social construction, separation between men's and women's roles, and stereotypes of "the protectors" and "the protected". What is often overlooked is that the military is an integral part of any political system. All Governments have a military, and economic dependence on the military is widespread. Since the military constitutes an important element of State order, decision-making and governance, all citizens should be concerned about the kind of military they have. By being outside the military, women cannot be involved in the decision-making related to the use of military forces or changes in military institutions and overall control over their performance. The military accounts for a large proportion of public expenditure, is an important employer, and provides career opportunities and training that can lead to careers outside the military.

105. Seventeen countries reported on the participation of women in the military. The data on the proportion of women is fragmented and not comparable. Some developing countries stated that although women were part of the military force, there were no figures available. Generally the participation of women as officers and even at the highest levels is on the increase, reaching in a few countries around 12 per cent. In one country, between September 1987 and June 1993, women's participation increased from 10.2 per cent to 11.6 per cent, despite reductions in the Department's personnel. There were three cases of top-ranking women.

106. The same tendency was noted with regard to women graduates of military academies. In one country they constituted 9.8 per cent of the total in June 1993, and it was noted that women were gradually promoted at rates similar to those of men. In one country, the ministry of defence established a network of women officers and cadets. In another country the scope of training for

women officers and cadets was modified to suit women's requirements. In another country, the participation of women in military academies was annually determined by a decision of the Minister of National Defence. It was 10 per cent in the year 1993/94, but in reality women in all three academies constituted less than 1 per cent. A number of countries reported lifting completely or partly the restrictions on women's participation in certain units, services (for example, submarines, fighter pilots) or combat activities. In most countries women remain excluded from combat duties or are restricted in them. Women continue to be represented in medical, administrative, legal, telecommunication, logistics, transportation and teaching branches.

107. In some countries military service is not compulsory, in others, it is compulsory for men. In most countries, the entry requirements, conditions of service and criteria for promotion for women were similar to those for men (except in areas from which women were excluded). One country, however, reported that women can be restricted to day-time duties by the commanding officer. The decision whether or not to deploy women in combat was also left to the discretion of the commander. There was a tendency to discriminate against women officers by offering them fewer educational and promotional opportunities and denying them leadership and decision-making posts because there was a "danger" of maternity and because women were "weaker". Discrimination can be also found in the rules governing marriages of personnel. They are gender neutral but, in practice, disadvantageous to women. For example, if an officer marries a fellow officer, a marriage allowance is paid to the head of the household, depending on who is senior; if a marriage takes place between officers of different ranks, the lower rank should resign; accommodation is offered to a senior spouse; marriages between women corp members and civilians are allowed, but a woman defence personnel who marries a civilian will not be given accommodation since it is expected that a husband will provide housing. Whenever the civilian husband is transferred to a town with no military barracks, the woman has to resign.

108. A few countries stated that women started to be enlisted and recruited for the first time, as logistic support, during the liberation wars in the region. A few countries referred to the participation of women in war as rebels.

109. A few countries referred to the participation of women in international military structures (NATO) and operations (Gulf War). One country made reference to Operation Desert Storm in Kuwait, in 1990-1991, where women represented 7 per cent of the force. They worked in all locations, including undeveloped desert areas, as clerks, mechanics, health-care providers, fuel handlers, intelligence analysts, helicopter pilots and military police. They were banned from combat but received all relevant allowances and ribbons. The perception of their performance was very high. They endured the same harsh conditions as the men; physical strength was not an issue; and gender did not determine a unit's cohesion - in fact, mixed-gender units sometimes functioned better.

b. Peace-keeping

110. Some countries reported on the participation of women in peace-keeping. They noted that it was a positive experience. In most cases women served in

support roles. In one case their participation was 32 per cent of the national force. Two Nordic countries pointed that women could sign up for a peace-keeping force after undergoing training, required for men as well. One country specified that women with military background could apply like men and be recruited, whereas women without that type of background could be recruited for administrative, support activities. Reference was made to the difficulties faced by women in the religious States. The awareness of such difficulties should become a part of the training. Although most women had non-military functions, there were three female officers. Another country noted that women performed a variety of functions, as medical and administrative personnel, in supply and logistics, as military police, and in civilian leadership positions with the Defence Department.

c. Civilian leadership positions

111. A few countries reported on the participation of women in civilian leadership positions in the military/security sector, thus confirming that they continue to be exceptional positions for women. One country referred to a woman serving as the chairperson of the National Unification Committee, negotiating the peace and reconciliation process in the country. Another country reported that women veterans offered comprehensive assistance to war veterans. It further pointed to the tradition of women occupying a few of the highest positions in the civilian arm of the defence forces. In order to facilitate this type of career, a variety of measures that were particularly helpful to women were taken. They included 317 family centres providing a variety of services; child care in 389 locations around the world; a special programme to address family and spousal abuse. The latter programme seemed to be particularly important since 64 per cent of the uniformed women officers and 30-40 per cent of the civilian military personnel reported being harassed. Unlike civilians, officers could not use the 1964 Civil Rights Act and had to rely on informal, ad hoc procedures. There was a high rate of unreported harassment, since officers feared dismissal or retaliation. The Department of Defence had also undertaken annual policy statements, training programmes, prompt and thorough investigations, accountability procedures for commanders and supervisors, procedures for seeking redress, sexual harassment prevention and education.

d. Police

112. In most of these countries reporting participation of women in the police force was on the increase. Most of the increase took place in the past five years. The same tendency applied to female cadets and trainees, which in 1993 in one country reached 33 per cent of the total. Only certain countries indicated the percentage of women police officers and high-ranking officials. In one country the percentage of women police chiefs was 13 per cent, the highest of all. Most women in the police force were specifically assigned to address the issue of violence against women, including rape, and take responsibility for female prisons and women prisoners. The special contribution of women in those areas was highly recognized. It, however, limited their possibilities for promotion and career development. Most countries addressed the issue of violence against women through special awareness-raising campaigns and training for the police. One country reported on the specific cultural

difficulties which police women faced with male colleagues and offenders, who did not recognize the authority of a woman. Another country reported on the creation in all police stations of special women's desks to handle the acts of violence against women. One country reported on special equality policies procedures to address sexual harassment within the police force, and attempts to provide part-time work opportunities and re-training which might be of special interest to women. One country stated that it excluded women from the fire brigade police.

7. Obstacles and incentives to women's participation

113. The two expert group meetings organized by the Division for the Advancement of Women in 1989 and 1991 provided some additional information on the obstacles to the participation of women in decision-making and civil service careers, including those in areas related to peace and security. In general, the obstacles include the unequal division of duties in the household and in the care of children and the elderly; the economic dependency of women; and prevailing inequality in all spheres of life, with violence against women as its extreme form. Other obstacles include women's double burden, negative attitudes to women's political participation or to women in non-traditional careers and media stereotyping.

114. The specific obstacles to the participation of women in the civil service include lack of adequate recruitment and promotion mechanisms; the prevalence of "closed" recruitment and promotion systems, often based on patronage, without clear requirements for entry or promotion; bias in job evaluation and classification; insufficient appeal mechanisms and a general absence of women from appeal bodies and selection, appointment and promotion panels; unequal opportunities for career and training development; and the marginalization of women in some areas of the civil service traditionally considered as related to women or in positions intended to implement affirmative action policies.

115. The factors conducive to the participation of women in political life, including participation in peace-related activities are identified in the existing documentation as level and field of education, democratic traditions of the country, public concern for women's legal rights, open attitudes to discussing women's issues, a tradition of respecting women's right to free choice in all spheres of life, a high level of literacy in the country, and knowledge of women's reproductive rights. There is also correlation between the participation of women in decision-making, including participation in peace-related decisions, and adherence to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Countries that adhere to the Convention without religious or cultural reservations have higher percentages of women in decision-making.

116. With regard to temporary measures aimed at the increased participation of women in peace-related activities, including decision-making, not much progress can be noted. Although article 4 of the Convention provides for temporary special measures aimed at accelerating de facto equality although its provisions could be used in connection with articles 7 and 8, which state that "all appropriate measures" should be undertaken to eliminate discrimination related

to the political participation of women at national and international levels, the introduction of quotas and targets is considered a controversial measure. Although some countries have established special measures and programmes to increase the qualitative and quantitative participation of women in decision-making and managerial posts, others consider such measures non-democratic. The most prominent example of affirmative action is provided by Nordic countries where all boards and public committees have a quota, ensuring participation by both sexes.

8. Effects of armed conflicts on women

117. Many countries - African ones, in particular - pointed that although women were not decision makers on war and peace, the devastating results of armed conflicts made them victims of displacement, poverty, family disintegration and loss of home and land. Armed conflicts also uprooted women from their cultural and family environment and made them refugees and single heads of households.

118. Due to conflicts in some regions, women have suffered from increased criminality, robberies, murders and harassment by soldiers, including rape. Massacres and rapes by security forces to get information on wanted persons are cases in point. In some areas, however, women are the victims of policies of ethnic purging and ethnic cleansing.

119. Reference was made by many to the invisible participation of women in the democratic process and decision-making. One country pointed that the reduced possibilities of women to influence political decisions on peace were due to psychological and material factors. The warfare in Europe made many to believe that it was necessary to have strong armed forces. Although women developed a new sense of violence and an understanding of the non-use of force, very little depended on them, and the peace process in the region was thus affected negatively.

9. Women refugees

120. Many States addressed the situation of refugees. Numerous and often violent ethnic, tribal and civil conflicts in some regions caused flows of refugees to neighbouring countries. In a few cases, also owing to military actions, there were internally displaced persons, including women. Natural disasters, such as famine, flood and drought, constituted a second reason for seeking refuge.

121. In the majority of cases, most of the refugees were women and children. They were particularly vulnerable to abuse and violence. They had often experienced or witnessed violence in their countries of origin. They were sexually molested by men taking advantage of the chaos and the collapse of structures and by the police and the military as well. They experienced hardship in transit and in refugee camps, where in general they could not decide their own fate since they had no impact on the administration or the decision-making. There were very few cases of women involved in the administration of camps. Despite the efforts of the United Nations High

Commissioner for Refugees, women and children refugees suffered disproportionately due to patterns of distribution within the camps and in the family. Refugee women had very limited work opportunities or access to credit. One country, citing the results of a study on women refugees, pointed out that among primary income earners, 35 per cent were women in villages, 32 per cent were in towns and 48 per cent were in refugee camps. Women were unaccustomed to being single heads of households, with men absent from the camps. They suffered from lack of privacy, psychological and mental health problems, broken interpersonal relations. Since men could not provide for their families, women assumed all family duties, which had negative consequences for their relationships. Women began to question the traditional role of men in the family. The study also called attention to the "invisible" displaced persons, often women, residing with relatives and not registered as refugees whose problems could not be addressed. One country reported on a special programme addressed to refugee victims of torture, which focused on women in order to teach them practical skills to service the community.

122. Many countries pointed that an influx of refugees can interfere with the daily life, culture and economic situation of the receiving country. That may lead to the xenophobia, intolerance and the insecurity of both, the receiving and the refugee population. Receiving countries in regions of armed conflict are cases in point.

123. Most countries reported on measures undertaken to assist refugee women. They included special educational programmes, including language courses; programmes of integration into the labour market; health care; social assistance, taking into consideration traditional barriers and child-care responsibilities; rental subsidies; education of the public through the mass media to be more tolerant to immigrants; self-help schemes, including training in tailoring and marketing; child care and family planning supported by the Government; and small enterprise programmes. One country reported on the establishment in 1994 of a special committee at the ministerial level on equal rights of men and women refugees, to examine the status of women refugees and to abolish the residence permit regulation when a woman refugee was a victim of violence or if her marriage had been dissolved. Another country referred to its refugee act, stating that women had the same opportunities as men to participate in training and instruction. Special training was provided for women as community workers. In 1989, upon assessment of the needs of refugee women, based on a special survey and contacts with women leaders and service providers, new programmes were set up focusing on special needs of women who were particularly vulnerable. They included the promotion of refugee women's initiatives, including literacy and English for homebound women; skills training; domestic violence counselling; leadership training; and assistance in establishing family business, often home-based.

124. Many countries supported UNHCR and its programmes and worked closely with international governmental and non-governmental organizations. One country introduced a programme called "Women at Risk" focusing on the special needs of refugee women. Another country reported on special measures to help women victims of armed conflict; to combat, in cooperation with UNRWA, UNHCR and the Red Cross the bias of certain humanitarian organizations against women; to support women victims of sexual abuse in the former Yugoslavia.

125. In some cases women played important roles in the rehabilitation of refugees and displaced persons at the family level and as community development assistants. Since in some countries, village women constituted most of the female refugees, some projects of assistance and rehabilitation included agricultural projects of non-governmental organizations with the governmental support. Some Governments created for women refugees self-help schemes, training them in tailoring, marketing, child care and family planning.

Notes

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2/ Kathleen Barry, Charlotte Bunch and Shirley Castley, eds., International Feminism: Networking Against Female Sexual Slavery (New York, International Women's Tribune Centre, 1984).

3/ Universal Declaration of Human Rights, art. 16 (3); International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, art. 23 (1); African Charter on Human and People's Rights, art. 18 (1).

4/ D. D'Monte, "Maharashtra clamps down on prenatal sex tests", People, (vol. 15, No. 3 (1998)); "Prenatal attack on women", Christian Science Monitor (10 March 1988), p. 23; V. Patel, "Sex determination and sex preselection tests: abuse of advanced technologies", in Women in Indian Society, Ghadially, ed. (London, Sage, 1988).

5/ S. Narasimhan, Sati: A Study of Widow Burning in India (New Delhi, Viking, 1990).

6/ Middle East Watch/Women's Rights Project, "Punishing the victim: rape and mistreatment of Asian maids in Kuwait", Human Rights Watch, vol. 4, No. 8 (August 1992).

7/ Asia Watch/Women's Rights Project, A Modern Form of Slavery: Trafficking of Burmese Women and Girls into Brothels in Thailand (New York, Human Rights Watch, 1993).

8/ Amnesty International, Rape and Sexual Abuse: Torture and Ill-treatment of Women in Detention. AI Index: ACT 77/11/91 (New York, Amnesty International, 1991); Women in the Front Line. AI Index: ACT 77/01/91 (New York, Amnesty International, 1991).

9/ Although rape, as well as sexual slavery and forced pregnancy, has always been a feature of war, the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia have produced the most recent evidence of women's vulnerability in conflict. See Amnesty International, Bosnia-Herzegovina: Rape and Sexual Abuse by Armed Forces. AI Index: EUR 63/01/93 (Washington, D.C., International Human Rights Law Group, 1993); No Justice, No Peace: Accountability for Rape and Gender-Based Violence in the Former Yugoslavia (Washington, D.C., Amnesty

International, 1994); Bosnia-Herzegovina: "You have no place here": Abuses in Bosnian Serb-controlled Areas. AI Index: EUR 63/11/94 (Washington, D.C., Amnesty International, 1994); "Rape and abuse of women in the territory of former Yugoslavia" (E/CN.4/1994/5). Evidence of the sexual victimization of women in the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia coincided with the revelation of systematic abduction of women, described as "comfort women", who were subsequently forced into prostitution by the Japanese army during World War II. See David E. Sanger, "Japan admits it ran army brothels during war", New York Times (8 July 1992).

10/ America's Watch and Women's Rights Project, Untold Terror: Violence against Women in Peru's Armed Conflict (New York, Human Rights Watch, 1991); Liberia: Women and Children Gravely Mistreated (Boston, Physicians for Human Rights).

11/ S. Wali, Female Victims of Sexual Violence: Rape Trauma and its Impact on Resettlement (Geneva, World Health Organization/United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 1990); The State of the World's Refugees: The Challenge of Protection (London: Penguin Books, 1993); "Note on certain aspects of sexual violence against refugee women" (EC/1993/SCP/CRP.2); Africa Watch and Women's Rights Project, Seeking Refuge, Finding Terror: The Widespread Rape of Somali Women Refugees in North Eastern Kenya (New York, Human Rights Watch, 1993).

12/ UNHCR, Guidelines for the Protection of Refugee Women (Geneva, 1991).

13/ "Note on certain aspects of sexual violence against refugee women" (EC/1993/SCP/CRP.2), paras. 9-12.

14/ Resolutions 1986/29 of 23 May 1986 and 1990/5 of 24 May 1990.

15/ See E/CN.6/1986/11, E/CN.6/1988/9 and E/CN.6/1992/5.

16/ Resolutions 47/96 of 16 December 1992 and 48/110 of 20 December 1993.

17/ Report of the Working Group on Slavery on its eighth session (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1982/21), chap. IV, recommendation 9.

18/ Resolution 1982/15 of 7 September 1982. The Subcommission appointed Mrs. Halima Warzazi as Special Rapporteur of the Working Group on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children. Her final report is to be found in document E/CN.4/Sub.2/1991/6 of 5 July 1991.

19/ Resolution 1988/57, on traditional practices affecting the health of women and children.

20/ Report of the Working Group on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children (E/CN.4/1986/42).

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22/ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Executive Committee Conclusion, No. 68 (XLIII), 1992; No. 73 (XLIV), 1993.

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24/ Roxanna Carillo, Battered Dreams: Violence Against Women as an Obstacle to Development (New York, UNIFEM, 1992).

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26/ Economic and Social Council resolution 1991/18. See also the report of the Expert Group Meeting on Violence against Women, Vienna, 11-15 November 1991 (EGM/VAW/1991/1).

27/ Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action of the World Conference on Human Rights, paras. 18 and 38. See also specific reference to violence against girl-children in para. 21 of the Declaration and paras. 48 and 49 of the Programme of Action.

28/ "Report of the Expert Group Meeting on Measures to Eradicate Violence against Women", 4-8 October 1993 (MAV/1993/1).

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PREPARATIONS FOR THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN: ACTION FOR EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE: REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NAIROBI FORWARD-LOOKING STRATEGIES FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

Second review and appraisal of the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

II. CRITICAL AREAS OF CONCERN

F. Inequality in women's access to and participation in the definition of economic structures and policies and the productive process itself

1. The Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women envisage a wide range of measures to increase women's access to and participation in the economy. They stress women's equal right to work and to receive benefits, including maternity benefits and the right to return to work. Employment was one of the three sub-themes of the United Nations Decade for Women and the Forward-looking Strategies set out a series of measures to ensure equal employment opportunities (paras. 132-147). They include the importance of enabling women to obtain "jobs involving more skills and responsibility, including those at the managerial level". They recommend changes in the structure of work that would allow women and men to reconcile productive and

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reproductive responsibilities. They call for the elimination of all forms of discrimination in employment, including in wages, and for breaking down gender-based occupational segregation. They call for the recognition of the contribution of older women.

2. The Forward-looking Strategies emphasize that women's economic independence is a necessary condition for their advancement. They assert that "economic independence is a necessary precondition for self-reliance" (para. 113) and that it is necessary to seek the participation of women as equal partners with men in all fields of work, equal access to all positions of employment, equal opportunities for education and training, and the protection of women at work and to recognize the need for women to be highly productive producers and managers of political, economic and social affairs. However, the Strategies make no direct reference to the importance of women's participation in economic decision-making. In some chapters, passing references are made to women managers and women entrepreneurs under the objectives of equality and development.

3. Discrimination promotes an uneconomic use of women's talents and therefore wastes the valuable human resources necessary for development. Ultimately, it is recognized that society is the loser if the talents of women are underutilized as a result of discrimination. Exclusion of women from policy-making and decision-making also makes it difficult for women and women's organizations to include their preferences and interests in the largely male-dominated decisions on economic policies.

4. In examining the progress made, the first review and appraisal concluded and recommended: 1/

> "5. Women have always been an important part of the workforce and their role will continue to grow with development, industrialization, economic necessity and the expansion of women's access to the economy. In most countries, however, the participation of women and men in the economy continues to be unequal, characterized by job segregation, insufficient training opportunities, unequal pay for work of equal value, inadequate career prospects and lack of full participation in economic decision-making.
>
> "Recommendation IV. Governments, non-governmental organizations and private-sector enterprises should take special measures to increase the proportion of women involved in economic decision-making, including studies on the incidence of women in such positions in the public and private sectors, the promotion of training programmes, analysis of alternative policies to provide women with careers leading to economic decision-making, and the adjustment of national legislation.
>
> "The United Nations should study the incidence of women in economic decision-making world wide, analyse innovative national programmes to increase the proportion of women in economic decision-making positions and publicize the results, within existing resources.

"Recommendation V. Governments and other appropriate parties should make efforts to increase the number of women in paid employment, including the adoption of measures to eliminate sex segregation in the labour market and to improve women's working conditions. Governments and other appropriate parties should collect, maintain and improve statistics showing the relative remuneration of women and men. They should renew their efforts to close the gap between women's and men's pay, possibly by 1995, and take special measures to address the principle of equal pay for work of equal value. They should also take concrete steps to measure the economic value of women's unpaid work with a view to taking it into account in national policies by 1995.

"The United Nations system should complete work on methodological aspects of measuring pay inequities between women and men, unpaid work and work in the informal sector and should publish studies of countries where such measurements have been made.

"...

"10. An economic environment of growth with equitable distribution, both at the national level and in the international economic system, is essential, as is the recognition of women's full participation. The feminization of poverty reflects the underlying structural problems faced by women in the midst of economic change. Prevailing economic policies at the national and international levels have frequently failed to take into account potential negative effects on women or women's potential contribution and have accordingly not succeeded.

"Recommendation VII. In order to help revitalize economic growth, international economic and social cooperation, together with sound economic policies, should be pursued. Structural adjustment and other economic reform measures should be designed and implemented so as to promote the full participation of women in the development process, while avoiding the negative economic and social effects. They should be accompanied by policies giving women equal access to credit, productive inputs, markets and decision-making and this should be incorporated fully into national economic policy and planning.

"The international development strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade should take full account of women's contribution and potential and this should be an important part of monitoring its implementation. Relevant organizations of the United Nations system should continue to examine the effects of national and international economic policies on social progress, in particular the condition of women in developing countries.

"11. The incorporation of women into the labour force has occurred on a scale unimaginable 30 years ago. Nevertheless, given unfavourable economic conditions in developing countries, the majority of women remain or are increasing in number in the informal sector of the economy.

"Recommendation VIII. Governmental policies, non-governmental action and international cooperation should be directed towards supporting programmes to improve the living conditions of women in the informal sector.

"These programmes should contribute, among other things, to the incorporation into the informal sector of appropriate technologies which could increase production in that sector and make domestic and international markets more accessible. Women in the informal sector shoul be encouraged to organize themselves so that they know their rights and ar able to obtain the necessary support to exercise them.

"Appropriate organizations at the international level should gather more detailed and accurate information related to women in the informal sector in order to identify the most efficient measures to ameliorate thei condition.

"...

"19. Urbanization, migration and economic changes have increased the proportion of families headed by women and the number of women entering th labour force. These women have experienced increasing difficulties in harmonizing their economic role with the demands on them to provide care for children and dependants. The double burden, rather than being reduced by greater sharing between spouses, has increased. Unless it is reduced, women will not be able to play their full and fair role in development.

"Recommendation XVII. Governments and other appropriate bodies should, by 1995, establish social support measures with the aim of facilitating the combination of parental and other caring responsibilities and paid employment, including policies for the provision of services and measures to increase the sharing of such responsibilities by men and women and to deal with specific problems of female-headed households that includ dependants."

1. Growth in female employment

5. During the past decade, female participation in the labour market has grow at an average of 10 per cent in all the regions of the world, twice the rate of their male counterparts. Women's representation in the economically active population increased considerably from 1970 to 1990 (see table II.F.1).

6. In most parts of the world, women are no longer a "reserve" labour force; women are increasingly becoming the workers who remain economically active throughout their working lives. The trend towards increased female participation in the labour force is a stable one, occurring at the same time a the economic activity rates for men have been falling.

7. In the countries belonging to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation an Development (OECD), there were 169.4 million women in the labour force in 1992, some 33 million more than in 1980. The economic participation of women grew by

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Table II.F.1. Average ratio of women to men in the economically active population, 1970-1990, by region

(Number of women for each 100 men)

Region	1970	1980	1990
Africa	39	58	71
Latin America and the Caribbean	35	48	62
Western Europe and others	45	60	72
Asia and the Pacific	28	42	48
Eastern Europe	79	81	85
World	37	52	62

2 per cent per annum, twice the rate of that of men, whose participation rate has been falling. In the United States of America, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden, women make up almost half of the labour force. Female employment has grown faster than the growth of the female labour force.

8. In Central and Eastern Europe, during the process of transition, female labour force participation has remained high. In spite of the economic decline, the participation of women in the labour force, especially women between the ages of 20 and 49, has not declined more than that of men. The labour force surveys conducted by the International Labour Organization (ILO) in the Russian Federation have found that, in the first phase of employment restructuring, women's share of employment in industry actually increased because they were inclined to keep their state sector jobs longer than men. In the transition economies in Asia, the proportion of the female population that is economically active has increased. In China, for example, the increase was from 49 per cent in 1980 to 54 per cent in 1990.

9. In the developing countries, conceptual and methodological constraints and conventional labour force definitions and statistical systems still do not adequately reflect women's productive work in the non-market economy, as producers in subsistence agriculture and in the urban and rural informal sector. However, in spite of the fact that much of the work done by women continues to be invisible, official statistics also confirm the increase in the female share of the labour force. For example, in Latin America and the Caribbean, the proportion of women in the labour force rose from 24 to 29 per cent between 1970 and 1990. In East and South-East Asia, women constitute 80 per cent of the workforce in the export-processing zones. In Africa, unofficial research data indicate high participation rates for women, who account for most of the food producers and those engaged in small-scale trading.

10. Gender differentials diminished between 1980 and 1990, with patterns varying between regions and countries. In spite of these differences, the number of women in the workforce increased almost continuously between 1970 and 1990. Countries that initially had the lowest rates of participation tended to experience the highest rates of increase. Women aged 15 and over currently make up about 41 per cent of the world's labour force. 2/

(a) Demographic factors

11. Demographic factors must be taken into consideration when examining trends in productive employment. ILO predicts that the workforce will grow from 2.4 billion persons in 1990 to 3.2 billion in 2010, a 35 per cent increase. The growth will take place disproportionately in most developing regions, with very little growth in the developed countries. It is estimated that the workforce in countries like Pakistan and Mexico will grow at about 3 per cent a year in the coming years. In contrast, growth rates in the United States of America, Canada and Japan will be lower, and in most of the European countries they will perhaps decline.

12. Predictions also indicate that women will enter the workforce in greater numbers, especially in most of the developing countries, where relatively few women have been absorbed to date. An increase is not expected in Europe, with the exception of the Mediterranean countries. Women will be responsible for maintaining rates of labour force participation in both developed and developing countries. These patterns are not only related to higher fertility rates in the developing countries but also reflect a growing trend of women leaving home for paid employment.

(b) Changes in attitudes towards paid work

13. The increased activity of women of reproductive age - 25 to 49 years - is another contributing factor to the higher rate of participation of women. Experience during the period 1980-1990 shows that women in this age group, as had been the case in 1970, were primarily responsible for the growth in the workforce in the European Union countries. This demonstrates a major change in social attitudes about the participation in the labour market of women of reproductive age.

14. Between 1984 and 1991, the average rate of participation of women with children increased from 50 per cent to more than 60 per cent in the European Union countries. The rate also increased for childless women, from 71 to 75 per cent over the same period. In Spain and Portugal, activity rates for women with and without children doubled between 1987 and 1991. The same phenomenon was noted in Latin America.

15. In the developing countries, the effect of women's changing attitudes towards work has received relatively little attention from researchers, although women are increasingly involved in economically productive activities. Increased communication systems reaching into remote, isolated areas, expanded education opportunities, changing family patterns, extensive migration and explosion of urban environments have affected the labour markets. Urbanization, industrialization and migration contributed to increased numbers of women

working outside the home. In these countries, the percentage of women in the paid labour force increased from 28 per cent in 1950 to 41 per cent in 1993.

16. The Human Development Report, 1993 provides indicators of females as a percentage of males in the labour force in some countries of Asia. There are high rates of participation in many countries, for example, Singapore (64 per cent), Thailand (88 per cent) and Mongolia (83 per cent).

17. Declines in female rates of participation are anticipated in sub-Saharan Africa, while increases are expected in North Africa and in Latin America and the Caribbean. This may be related to patterns of emigration of the female labour force to other regions.

18. Obstacles to increased rates of participation by women remain. Non-sharing of responsibilities in the family and the lack of social services in both developed and developing countries pose serious problems. The majority of women must combine economically productive work with the care of their children, or of disabled or elderly people. The burden of this responsibility restricts the options for women.

2. Employment structure and women

19. There are gender differentials in rates of participation in sectors and occupations, although women's participation is increasing in those sectors that have the highest rates of growth. For the period 1970 to 1990, the rate of participation of women approached that of men in professional and technical and administrative and management occupations. The ratio of women to men in those occupations increased considerably in all regions, except in Eastern Europe where, in 1970, the ratio of women to men was already high (see table II.F.2).

Table II.F.2. Average ratio of women to men in professional and technical and administrative and management occupations, 1970-1990, by region

(Number of women for each 100 men)

Region	1970	1980	1990
Africa	19	40	56
Latin America and the Caribbean	50	82	85
Western Europe and others	45	60	72
Asia and the Pacific	28	42	48
Eastern Europe	79	81	85
World	37	52	62

20. Global trends confirm that women are entering professional and technical occupations in large numbers (see table II.F.3). Rates increased from 11.94 per cent of working women in 1970 to 13.17 per cent in 1990. The proportion of women professionals is particularly high in Latin America and Eastern and Western Europe, closing the gap between men and women.

Table II.F.3. Occupational category by sex, 1970, 1980, 1990, global perspective

(Percentage)

	1970		1980		1990	
Occupational group	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Professional and technical	11.9	5.6	11.8	6.6	13.2	8.2
Administrative and management	0.8	2.1	0.3	2.5	1.8	3.2
Clerical	10.8	5.9	11.8	5.7	13.3	6.5
Sales	7.8	6.0	0.9	5.3	9.9	7.2
Service	18.3	5.9	13.6	6.2	14.6	6.8
Agriculture	27.0	33.5	29.1	32.7	24.7	28.0
Production	14.5	32.1	29.7	29.7	12.6	31.7
Not classified, unemployed	6.1	6.3	9.5	7.5	9.0	7.5

21. Shifts in female participation in the labour force between 1970 and 1990 should be noted. Women's employment in the traditional service sector declined during the period, corresponding to the increase in the clerical, professional and technical sectors. There was an increase in women's employment in the production sector between 1970 and 1980 and a decrease from 1980 to 1990. The decline in women's and men's participation in agriculture is also evident.

22. In Africa, the ratio of women to men in agriculture grew from 68 to 71 per cent. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the ratio increased from 16 to 19 per cent, in Western Europe from 42 to 54 per cent and in Asia from 45 to 47 per cent. There was a decline in the ratio of women's to men's participation in agricultural employment in Eastern Europe, from 105 to 84 per cent. Eastern Europe has by far, the most equal rates of participation for women and men in agriculture (see table II.F.4).

Table II.F.4. Average ratio of women to men in agriculture, 1980-1990, by region

(Number of women for each 100 men)

Region	1980	1990
Africa	68	71
Latin America and the Caribbean	16	19
Western Europe and others	42	54
Asia and the Pacific	45	47
Eastern Europe	105	84

23. When comparing the distribution of occupations between the female and male economically active population, a different picture arises. According to table II.F.3, the world-wide trend between 1980 and 1990 was towards a decrease in agricultural employment. Globally, 32.7 per cent of the male labour force was employed in agriculture in 1980 and 28.0 per cent in 1990. For women, the rates were 29.1 per cent in 1980 and 24.7 per cent in 1990. Asia and Africa still have the greatest number of people employed in this sector.

24. There were more men than women employed in the production sector in 1990, with 31.7 per cent of men against 12.6 per cent of women. A large decline in the proportion of women working in this sector occurred between 1980 and 1990, from 29.7 to 12.6 per cent (see table II.F.3). Economies in Asia and Africa tended to employ an increasing number of women in the production sector between 1970 and 1980. In Latin America, female employment in production declined between 1970 and 1990. Despite improvements, the ratio of women to men working in this sector is low in all regions (see table II.F.5).

25. Other conclusions can be drawn from the available data. The effects of the increase in the level of education in the previous decades were reflected in the growing number of women employed in professional and technical occupations, primarily in services. Younger women and those with skills have been better received in the service sector. The increase in professional and technical positions in certain regions demonstrates this trend. Less educated women are likely to be in a disadvantageous position.

26. In the report of Indonesia it is noted that there has been a marked increase in women's employment in the non-agricultural sectors during the 1980s. However, the increase in female non-agricultural employment has been largely confined to trade and, to a smaller extent, to manufacturing and services. In manufacturing, the number of women per 100 men actually fell slightly, from 78 to 77.

Table II.F.5. Average ratio of women to men in production, 1980-1990, by region

(Number of women for each 100 men)

Region	1980	1990
Africa	16	27
Latin America and the Caribbean	19	24
Western Europe and others	17	20
Asia and the Pacific	25	21
Eastern Europe	34	45

27. Employment in manufacturing grew by 73 per cent between 1980 and 1990, but most of the new job opportunities were filled by younger women in urban areas. However, the growth in factory employment was even more rapid for males. This may be due to the fact that export-oriented industrialization policies have tended to favour larger-scale enterprises. By contrast, many traditional manufacturing industries, particularly those located in rural areas which are more numerous, more labour intensive and employ a larger proportion of women, especially during slack periods in the agricultural cycle, have stagnated under the pressure of increased competition. 3/ The pattern may change in the future. The establishment of the South and North Growth Triangles in the region covered by the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), together with new export zones in other areas of Indonesia, can be expected to favour female employment. Policies to support the manufacture of handicrafts may also increase the employment of women in small-scale industries.

(a) Segregation in employment

28. In both developed and developing countries, gender-based segregation by occupation remains very high. Growth in the female share of the labour market has not had a significant impact on the mechanism of segregation.

29. The 1993 Employment Report of the Commission of the European Union states that the results of the past decade are a kind of paradox. In all 12 countries, at a time when the extent of men and women's involvement in the labour market has become more similar, inequalities in employment still exist. Market segregation has persisted in the type of work done as well as in the sectors in which expansion of work undertaken predominantly by women has occurred.

30. In Asia, where the feminization of employment is a fact and where employment has grown faster for women than for men, gender-based differentials also exist in most countries. Women's employment grew in manufacturing, services and trade, but the majority of women in the region are absorbed in subsistence agriculture as unpaid family labour and unskilled agriculture labour.

31. The 1993 report of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) network on the situation of women in the labour market demonstrates that rising female participation throughout the European Community has not reduced and is not likely to reduce occupational segregation and labour market inequality by gender. No evidence was found to suggest that higher female participation in the labour force or higher levels of economic development would reduce segregation. Over-representation of women in service and clerical work was not evident in some other countries, and the number of women in professional occupations was as high, if not higher, in some developing countries.

32. Even the very high participation rates of women in the Eastern European countries has not led to an integrated labour market. Women in Eastern European countries were concentrated in female occupations and underrepresented in science, technology and leadership positions.

33. Occupational segregation is likely to remain a persistent characteristic of all labour markets, and a characteristic that needs to be taken into account in all types of employment analyses. Despite the broadly similar patterns of occupational segregation, there were sufficient differences between countries to suggest that social, cultural and labour market forces within each country play an important role in shaping the form and degree of segregation.

34. If the distribution of women's employment is considered by seven major occupation groups - professional and technical, administrative and managerial, clerical, sales, services, agriculture, and production - it can be noted that women are concentrated in clerical, services and professional and technical occupations. In Chile, where women made up 30.5 per cent of the labour force in 1991, they represented 51.3 per cent of service workers; in Canada, where women made up 45.3 per cent of the labour force, they represented 55.7 per cent of professional and technical workers, 80.7 per cent of clerical workers and 56.6 per cent of those in services.

35. Country differences persist in the extent of feminization of many clerical and service jobs, differences associated with social and cultural organization, industrial structure, union organization, the prevalence of part-time work and labour market organization, among other factors. Women are particularly likely to remain excluded from certain service occupations, where the job has retained its craft and skilled status or where men are still interested in maintaining access to service or clerical careers.

36. The prospects for the future, without major new policy initiatives, are a continuation of the dual trend towards the greater integration of women into higher-level jobs and the increasing concentration of the remaining female labour force in lower-grade and highly feminized sectors. These trends will not remove the problem of inequalities between the sexes in the upper echelons of the labour market; they will, however, add the problem of increasing inequalities within the female workforce itself.

(b) Service sector

37. In the 1980s, the service sector began to attract women in many regions and countries. In the OECD countries, for example, most of the new jobs created during that period were in services and benefited women. Women's employment in the service sector world wide grew more rapidly over time than that for men. This accounts in large part for the overall increase in the growth of female employment in the past decade. Studies show that countries with the fastest growth in female employment have combined public sector activities with business and financial services.

Table II.F.6. Average ratio of women to men in services, 1980-1990, by region

(Number of women for each 100 men)

Region	1980	1990
Africa	55	75
Latin America and the Caribbean	156	184
Western Europe and others	206	200
Asia and the Pacific	49	68
Eastern Europe	32	31

(c) Atypical and/or precarious employment

38. Over the past decade, in both developed and developing countries, economic processes caused a situation that resulted in the limited creation of stable, full-time jobs. The majority of newly created jobs have tended to be atypical. As it turned out, these atypical employment patterns correlate with the feminization of the labour force. According to ILO studies, an increasing number of women are entering small and medium-sized enterprises in the informal sector, are taking part-time or temporary jobs or are engaged in teleworking, subcontracting or self-employment. Some women are taking such jobs because of flexible hours, which make it convenient for them to reconcile work and family responsibilities. However, for growing numbers of women, part-time or temporary work is not voluntary.

39. Although there has been some progress in the industrialized countries, especially in the public sector, in extending social protection to part-time workers, on the whole, part-time and other non-standard forms of employment are accompanied by low pay, lack of rights, no opportunities for training and no promotion prospects. Part-time employment is concentrated in the service sector, where the majority of workers are women. Therefore, it is not surprising that the majority of part-time workers are women. In the OECD countries, women constitute between 65 and 90 per cent of part-time workers. In 1991-1992, 62 per cent of all women workers were employed on a part-time basis

in the Netherlands and more than 40 per cent in Australia, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom. In Spain, some 38 per cent of all female workers are temporary, as compared to 29 per cent of employed men. The proportion of women among home workers range from 90-95 per cent in Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy and the Netherlands, to 84 per cent in France, 75 per cent in Spain and 70 per cent in the United Kingdom. 4/

40. In Africa, women tend to be concentrated in small-scale, under-capitalized, low-productivity market trade and personal service activities. In West Africa, women make up between 60 and 80 per cent of the urban labour force in trading and dominate in small-scale trading.

41. In Latin America, there is a growing incidence of part-time employment among women. In Asia, women commonly dominate in hawking and trading activities. According to ILO studies, there has recently been an increase in women's involvement in micro or small-scale production activities and home-based activities, as self-employed or piece-rate workers. In Indonesia, for example, more than one fifth of all women in the workforce are in trading, although this is the least lucrative of the self-employment activities.

(d) Unemployment

42. The growth in female employment that occurred during the past decade did not generate a corresponding drop in unemployment. The creation of jobs and steady unemployment coexisted. Though more men than women are openly unemployed because of their larger numbers in the labour force, women's unemployment rates tend to be higher than those of men. In the majority of the OECD countries, women's unemployment rates exceed those of men. In 1992, the recorded unemployment rate for women in Europe was 11.5 per cent as compared to the overall rate of 9.9 per cent. 5/ Such conclusions are based on the definition of "unemployed", which includes the following criteria: being without work, having looked actively for work in a recent period, and being available for work almost at once. This definition is restrictive, as it excludes part-time workers who want to work full-time, discouraged workers who say that job-search is fruitless, and those who need more than one or two weeks before they can start working. If all those factors were taken into account, the overall gap between female and male unemployment rates would only widen.

43. The transition in the Central and Eastern European countries increased unemployment among women. Loss of employment by women in those countries often means more than loss of income. Women in that region have achieved a high educational level and have been in the paid labour force for a long period of time. Only Hungary reported a higher unemployment rate for men than for women. In the Russian Federation, the share of women among the unemployed has reached a particularly high level, estimated at 70-80 per cent.

44. In Africa, the rates of open unemployment for women are often double those for men and have been rising, according to ILO observations. In Egypt, for example, the female rate of unemployment in 1991 was 27.8 per cent as compared to only 6.3 per cent for males.

45. The same situation exists in the Asian and Pacific region. In Sri Lanka, for instance, the 1992 unemployment rate was 21.0 per cent for women as compared to 10.6 per cent for men. In Pakistan, the 1990-1991 unemployment rate was 13.8 per cent for women and 3.9 per cent for men in rural areas and 27.8 per cent for women and 5.9 per cent for men in urban areas.

46. If absolute levels of unemployment are considered, the gender gap is rather large in some Latin American and Caribbean countries. In addition, the mean period of unemployment is longer for women than for men - 11.2 months as compared to 8 months.

47. In most countries, the rate of unemployment has risen more for women than for men and the unemployment gender gap exists in every region. The largest increase was in Latin America. According to studies from Eastern Europe, female unemployment also rose in that region, with the exception of Hungary, where the position of women is strong in the service sector and women were not replaced by men in service activities. A lower rate of female unemployment appears in Africa and Asia. Although the ratio of unemployed women to men decreased in Asia, indicators show an increase of women listed as unclassified. 6/

(e) Wage differentials

48. The principle of equal remuneration is included in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, as well as in various ILO conventions and recommendations. Moreover, the ILO Convention concerning Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value, 1951 (No. 100) has one of the highest ratification rates of all ILO standards. However, the gap between female and male earnings represents one of the most persistent forms of discrimination against women. The pattern of unequal remuneration is universal, although the level of inequality varies from place to place.

49. In industrialized countries, women receive 70-80 per cent of the hourly pay rates of men. In India, Japan and the Republic of Korea, women receive about half the pay of men. According to ILO data for the manufacturing sector, contained in the 1990 Yearbook of Labour Statistics, the ratio world wide ranged from 50 to 90 per cent in 1990.

50. In Asia, the male-female gap is wider in manufacturing (64.8 per cent) and non-agricultural jobs (68.2 per cent), in Latin America and the Caribbean in non-agricultural jobs (68.7 per cent) and in Africa, in agriculture (69.2 per cent), with a large decrease in women's wages in some cases. In Asia, the ratio of women's to men's wages in the non-agricultural and manufacturing sectors decreased from 91.5 to 68.2 per cent and from 72 to 64.8 per cent, respectively, between 1970 and 1990. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the income of women declined compared to that of men between 1970 and 1990, with the largest decline in production.

51. There were decreases in women's wages in the agricultural sector in some countries in Africa and in the manufacturing sector in Latin America and the Caribbean. These were related to the trend towards informalization in many developing economies experiencing recession and adjustment. Wages and salaries

from the formal sector are no longer sufficient to cover the basic needs of households in many countries. This has implications for women in terms of the additional pressure for them to work outside the home.

52. Increases in women's wages were noted in the non-agricultural sector in Africa, Western Europe and Eastern Europe, which demonstrate the advancement of women in the service sector. In Africa, the increase in the ratio of women's to men's wages was from 61.5 per cent in 1970 to 89.4 per cent in 1990, in Western Europe, the ratio increased from 68.8 per cent in 1970 to 78.3 per cent in 1990 and in Eastern Europe, from 69.2 per cent in 1970 to 75.4 per cent in 1990.

53. In the manufacturing sector, over the same period of time, women's wages increased in Africa from 63.50 per cent in 1970 to 73.3 per cent in 1990, in Western Europe, from 66.0 per cent in 1970 to 74.6 per cent in 1990, and in Eastern Europe from 68.8 per cent in 1970 to 72.8 per cent in 1990.

54. The gap between wages paid to men and wages paid to women also exists in the 12 member States of the European Community. Between 1980 and 1988, it remained constant in several countries, whereas in others, some progress has been recorded. In the industrialized world, women earn from 50 to 80 per cent the amount that men earn. Several factors contribute to this phenomenon: women work more often in sectors where salaries are lower and where they have less access to senior positions. There are several theories to explain these factors; these theories are not mutually exclusive, but rather complement each other. Studies show that some of the discrepancies in wages between men and women can be explained by differences in training, professional experience and age. Other differences can be attributed to an unequal breakdown in sectors of activities, professions and training levels. Other differences are not explained and are the result of various forms of discrimination, direct or indirect.

3. Rural women

55. Women play important roles in agricultural production, comprising 67 per cent of the agricultural labour force in the developing countries. In sub-Saharan Africa, almost 80 per cent of all economically active women are in the agricultural sector. In Asia, in such countries as Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal and Pakistan, women constitute about 40 per cent of the agricultural labour force, and in Sri Lanka, Thailand and Turkey, up to 50 per cent.

56. The most important change in the agricultural sector occurred with the introduction of cash crops, which took place in Africa and Latin America. These paid jobs were offered primarily to men, while women were left to cultivate food crops on increasingly marginal land. In addition, women are often not trained for such new activities and lack the basic resources that men have when they start to work in new areas.

57. Women produce 50 per cent of the food grown world wide; in Africa, they produce an estimated 70 per cent of the continent's food. In addition to crop production, rural women obtain food from many other sources. In many parts of

the world, women have the primary responsibility for food gathering from communal lands and forests in order to supplement family diets and income.

58. In most countries, livestock husbandry is also the responsibility of women. Although men often remain the owners and sellers of large livestock, the bulk of domestic labour related to animals is the responsibility of women. In Pakistan, for example, women are responsible for 60 to 80 per cent of the cleaning, feeding and milking of livestock.

59. Rural women tend to be consistently underserved and difficult to reach with development resources. Owing to the traditional division of labour and the persistent discrimination against women, even available scarce resources favour more men than women.

60. Rural women constitute the group that has benefited least from industrialization and urbanization and often tend to be the worst hit by the effects of rural-urban migration. While men are leaving for the cities to seek employment, women are left on their own in rural areas, assuming increased responsibilities in subsistence food production and for their families' well-being. Rural-urban migration in Africa, Asia and the Pacific and the Middle East is dominated by men. Only in Latin America and the Caribbean do women, especially those young and single, represent the overwhelming majority in migration flows to the cities. The main reason for rural women in Latin America to migrate to the cities is the lack of access to land and the mechanization of agriculture, as well as the presence of job opportunities in the cities, especially in textiles and food-processing, and in the informal sector, in domestic services and street vending.

61. In several countries of Asia, teenage and young women are increasingly joining the rural-urban migration. In the Philippines, for example, 7 out of 10 females employed in the service sector in urban areas are migrants.

62. In many parts of the world, agricultural policies have been translated into increased poverty in rural areas, with farming families needing to supplement their income through diversified income-generating activities, through migration to urban areas and through attempts to expand production by cultivating marginal land, and converting food crop land into cash-crop production. The impact on women varies from the need to fit additional work into an already full and tiring day, to taking on the agricultural work of an absent husband, to additional responsibilities on a husband's enlarged plot or new production scheme, to the loss of an independent income from her personal plot which has been taken over for family production.

63. The lack of adequate data on women's roles, both productive and reproductive, has contributed to the continuing under-estimation and undervaluing of rural women's contribution to economic production and growth. In addition, concepts and classifications commonly used for data collection do not reflect small-scale or subsistence agriculture, ignoring important parts of women's work and of overall economic production.

(a) Access to and control of land

64. Gender asymmetries in access to land remain one of the main obstacles to the full participation of women in rural development. Inheritance practices, whereby land traditionally passes from father to son, reinforce male control of land. Although many developing countries have passed statutes legally affirming a woman's fundamental right to own land, in practice female control of land is rare. Indeed, reform measures have not been gender neutral and women have been excluded in varying degrees either legally or by de facto measures. Bestowing rights on heads of household, as for example, on land that was formerly held communally, has overridden a variety of former land inheritance patterns in some countries and reinforced discriminatory practices against women. Moreover, in many countries, there is no legislative provision for widowed, separated or divorced women.

65. Women typically farm small, dispersed or remote plots of fragmented land in which they have little incentive to invest or adopt new technologies. In most countries, land titles are registered in the name of the male heads of household and women do not have secure land tenure. The fact that women do not own land may mean that they cannot get access to agricultural support services, particularly credit and extension services where land ownership is a requirement or extension workers are reluctant to work with small, isolated plots.

66. The difficulties experienced by rural women in securing access to land are even greater for women heads of household. Review of land reform programmes in various countries indicates that, regardless of whether the sex of the beneficiary is specified by law, women heads of household seldom have access to land even when their productive activities call for it. Without title to land, those women lack the collateral necessary to obtain credit and may face difficulties in obtaining extensions.

67. The findings of the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (WCARRD) include the following points as issues critical to women's access to land:

(a) High population pressure and increased commercialization of agriculture result in less equitable distribution of land rights under communal tenure; women's land rights are often eroded;

(b) Growing population pressure has, for example, neutralized efforts to improve women's land rights in sub-Saharan Africa; women are managing smaller plots as the land quality deteriorates;

(c) Land redistribution programmes usually target the household unit, with little attention to the distribution of land within the household and to women's special needs;

(d) Land titling adversely affects poor rural women. Titles, usually registered in the names of male heads of household, diminish women's customary rights of land use and transfer. Consequences for women's traditional independent farming practices vary; they are often undermined, while intra-household gender disparities in income and decision-making increase. In

some cases in Africa, men take advantage of their greater control over land to redesignate land formerly cultivated by women as household land. This provides the opportunity to increase male demands for female household labour on male-controlled household plots. In other cases, women receive smaller and less fertile household plots as their personal plots;

(e) The privatization of common property resources can have a disproportionately negative impact on poor rural women since fuel and fodder gathering are primarily female tasks. The same applies to materials for handicrafts, which are an important income-generating activity for rural women.

68. In spite of the negative prospects for rural women, national machineries have been successful in promoting innovative initiatives in some countries in the Indian subcontinent, Central and South America and West Africa. There has been a major policy change on agrarian reform in recent years, whereby women have often been defined as the beneficiaries, and granted the right to own land either jointly or with men. Legal changes are allowing a small number of women in various developing countries to take steps towards gaining access to and control over the land they farm.

69. The improvement of women's legal access to land is a basic prerequisite for the success of rural development policies. Activities that could be considered for the improvement of women's access to and control over land include legal literacy training for both women and men on women's rights, research on legislative reforms for rural areas, removing barriers to the effective implementation of existing laws, focusing on ways to improve women's participation in self-help and cooperative groups, enhancing productivity to create incentives for women to invest in the land they cultivate, and encouraging Governments to invest in women's labour and in meeting their needs.

(b) Access to labour

70. Command over labour resources is a factor that critically impacts on the real and potential productivity of women in agriculture. The amount of land they can cultivate is directly related to labour availability - their own, that of other family members and hired labour. The considerably longer labour hours of women and limited access to paid labour because of the lack of financial resources complicates the potential expansion of agricultural production even where women have traditional, and often seasonal, rights to husband's labour for such tasks as helping to clear their individual plots. Moreover, increasing rates of male out-migration imply that the availability of men, even for limited labour inputs, is reduced. The labour availability of young women is also declining as they migrate to urban areas in search of employment and improved lifestyles.

71. Women's access to land is dependent on their willingness to provide domestic labour and to help in agricultural and off-farm activities controlled by their husbands and senior family members. Men can mobilize the labour of wives and children in male-controlled productive activities, whereas women may only have access to daughters and younger sons. The need to draw on the labour of offspring may influence children's, especially girls', rates of school

attendance, and, in the longer term, impact on the perpetuation of poverty cycles.

(c) Incorporation of sustainable development techniques into productive activities

72. The interrelationship between women, environment and development has been increasingly recognized. In most developing countries, food production is undertaken mainly by women, and therefore, issues related to food security, land rights and environmentally sustainable land-use practices are central to their lives. Gender imbalances in access to resources impact negatively on their ability to play vital custodial roles in sustainable environment practices.

73. Environmental deterioration has reached significant proportions over the past decade. The main causes are rapid population growth, increased pressure on land, deforestation, shifting cultivation and desertification. The depletion of forestry resources, in particular, has had a significant negative impact on women. Apart from their value as a productive resource, trees protect the quality of the soil and water and most tropical farming systems are unsustainable without trees as part of the system. Forests provide food, fodder and fibre - products that fall within women's responsibility. Small-scale enterprises dependent on forestry products are among the major employers of rural women, particularly the landless and resource poor.

74. It is essential to learn from rural women about conservation and management of the environment and to take their indigenous knowledge into account when developing concrete policies and projects. However, their often excessive utilization of natural resources is frequently stipulated by the lack of access to appropriate technology.

75. Rural women are in great need of labour-saving techniques, convenient and close access to water resources and the introduction of such collective facilities as community wood lots and grain mills.

(d) Access to appropriate and affordable technology

76. New agricultural technologies should be accessible, environmentally appropriate and preferably utilize local materials. They should maximize efficiency without threatening women's and men's jobs in the rural sector. New agricultural technologies include new crop varieties and breeds of livestock, and improved tools, cultivation methods, including consistent access to draught animals, and mechanization practices.

77. A review of projects over the past decade reveals that technology, if not carefully evaluated before introduction and use, can have unforeseen negative effects on women. In many parts of the developing world, the mechanization of agriculture, for example the use of tractors, has resulted in the masculinization of modern agriculture and the feminization of labour in subsistence agriculture or on family farms. Another unforeseen negative impact on women results from certain types of irrigation technology: although irrigation technology can increase crop production and make water more readily available to households and livestock, in some cases it can affect women

negatively by increasing the time needed to transplant crops, weed and harvest. New technologies can also be too expensive for resource-poor rural women to buy. One way to solve this problem is to learn from the traditional practices of rural women and minimize the use of expensive technology. The upgrading of traditional food-processing techniques can be undertaken without resorting to expensive technology.

78. Rural women have a rich traditional knowledge of the production, processing storage and nutritional characteristics of a wide range of crops and wild plants, methods of soil conservation and enrichment, and issues related to the rearing of livestock. Such stores of knowledge must be tapped.

(e) Credit and financial services that address rural women's unique situations

79. Among the barriers to women's access to credit and financial markets are the assumptions that women farmers do not make cropping and input decisions even when they are heads of household, that their primary involvement in subsistence production limits the time they can devote to market-oriented activities, that they pose a high credit risk and that they can absorb only small loans which carry high administrative costs for financial institutions. Comprehensive programmes of agricultural or seasonal credit which provide for group guarantees sometimes fail to extend credit to poorer women and men because of the fear that group guarantee mechanisms will be jeopardized by the risk associated with the inclusion of poor subsistence farmers. Moreover, women have limited access to cooperatives and other organizations through which credit may be channelled to farmers.

80. Women's access to credit is often limited by their lack of proper education, as they often do not know the appropriate procedures, as well as lack of collateral and the distant location of credit facilities. In the vast majority of cases, they must rely on their husbands and male relatives, or on money-lenders who tend to charge high interest rates. On the whole, banks have tended to underestimate the productivity of women farmers and their ability to repay loans. The marketable surplus that often results from subsistence production is not taken into account nor is the fact that productivity-enhancing inputs can increase the volume of this marketable surplus.

81. The extent of the barriers to rural women's access to credit and financial services is perhaps best exemplified by the proportion of multilateral bank loans to agriculture and rural development that reach them: in 1990, US$ 5.8 billion was allocated to agriculture and rural development in the developing countries. Of this figure, 5 per cent reached rural women even though they grow more than 50 per cent of the food in the developing world and have repayment records that are usually higher than those of men. Women's World Banking, with affiliates in 44 countries, has recorded a 97 per cent repayment rate for women in Africa.

82. Credit is essential for women to obtain vital agricultural inputs such as seeds, fertilizers and pesticides, as well as to buy tools, procure animal draught power, hire extra labour, construct irrigation systems and take soil and water conservation measures. Credit availability is not a sufficient condition for the guarantee of sustainable improvement in women's conditions.

83. Provision of credit must be accompanied by appropriate technological advice and training, as well as applied research, in particular in sectors in which women are involved, including traditional food crops such as cassava, cowpeas, sorghum, millet, plantain and sweet potatoes, which provide up to two thirds of family nutrition, small livestock and poultry and home vegetable gardens.

84. Efforts to provide credit to rural women must begin with an examination of local conditions to determine the most effective mechanisms of reaching the poorest women. Provision should be made for training components, as well as strategies that replace the collateral requirements of financial institutions. Moreover, cognizance must be taken of the diversity of rural women's production activities which have seasonal components and include capital requirements for small investments as well as working capital to support market-oriented production and trading activities. Also, the mix of infrastructure, extension, training and marketing support must be carefully targeted to meet rural women's needs in subsistence and market-oriented activities. Assistance must be provided to rural women to ensure the channelling of resources to systems and subsystems for which they are responsible in order to avoid the diversion of resources to production dominated by male members of the household.

85. Staff of financial institutions should be trained to understand both the productive and the reproductive roles of women and identify modes for matching these needs with credit availability. The special needs of women farmers must be carefully identified. This includes, for example, the need to hire help during periods of labour shortage, food processing, forestry products transformation, purchase of inputs for reforestation programmes, or the organization of fish marketing infrastructure.

86. Policies of financial institutions can be enhanced to increase rural women's access to financial services and technical assistance through such schemes as promoting the design of plans of action for increasing women's access to financial services; encouraging documentation and exchange of experience among financial institutions on innovative credit schemes that provide easier access to rural women; development of options for financial services, technical assistance, training and resources with special attention to rural women's needs; and establishment of closer links with women bankers in those financial institutions that receive loans from international organizations. Creating and strengthening linkages between banks, government-sponsored seasonal credit programmes and village-based savings and credit groups are important means of increasing the availability of credit to poor rural women.

87. The impact of credit availability can be dramatic, both on family well-being and on the community at large. Apart from the economic advantage of increased productivity and higher income, the increase in women's earning power has a tremendous effect on their self-confidence. Increased self-esteem has often led women to enrol in education programmes and insist on having a greater role in community activities - initiatives that previously they would never have considered.

(f) Appropriate extension services and training

88. The needs of women farmers have generally been overlooked in the provision of extension services. Although women represent up to 80 per cent of the food producers in some countries, they receive only 2 to 13 per cent of extension services. Only 5 per cent of extension organizations' time and resources are allocated to women world wide and only 13 per cent of extension workers world wide are women.

89. The effective delivery of extension services to women farmers entails ensuring the availability of complete and correct information on women producers in the region, seeking ways to overcome restrictions on the interaction and interrelationships between rural men and women, making extension services useful to women as well as to men, identifying ways to provide extension advice to female producers through working with women only, as well as with mixed groups, taking extension activities to women's work sites and adapting approaches to fragmented patterns of women's time allocation.

90. Extension services are often not effective in reaching women because information is geared to male producers' needs in cash cropping and is often not applicable to subsistence crops and livestock, which may be women's concerns. Modes of communication and organization of extension information may be inappropriate for rural women of varying and usually low levels of educational attainment and literacy, and scheduling of activities may fail to take account of women's fragmented time allocation schedules.

91. Extension service objectives may not be realized and communities harmed when training and inputs are given to male farmers to increase cash-crop production without corresponding attention to women farmers to grow food crops. Such oversights can contribute to a decrease in food production and, by extension, increased malnutrition within communities.

92. The link between extension services and research should be improved to ensure that gender-sensitive research findings are incorporated into extension programmes and that rural women's production-related needs are being addressed. The provision of appropriate technology that is both labour- and energy-saving should be based on research and communication with targeted populations. Such technology should cover the range of activities in which women farmers, producers and processors are engaged to alleviate the constraints they face and to meet their production objectives.

93. Research and data-collection requirements include addressing gender concerns in baseline surveys and questionnaires and conducting gender-disaggregated needs assessments prior to the commencement of activities. The collection of gender-disaggregated data on agricultural activities and constraints are required for use in the design, implementation and monitoring of extension activities as are intra-household analyses and time-use studies.

94. Extension systems should identify gender specificities in their work, pay attention to women producers and processors' extension needs and constraints, modify extension messages for their delivery, make their monitoring and evaluation system more participatory, evaluate results and problems according to

gender and feed the information back to men and women. Areas of intervention should be prioritized according to the needs of women and men farmers.

95. Strategies should be identified for the number of women extension agents. Constraints to increasing women's enrolment in lower, middle and higher agricultural educational institutions should be examined and strategies formulated for overcoming the constraints. Gender-sensitive training should be provided for male agents to enhance the understanding of the needs of women farmers. Efforts to increase the pool of women extension agents should include retraining agents in other fields in skills required to service women farmers, equalizing the status of female and male agents through equal training and employment conditions and increasing the involvement of local women as para-extension staff.

4. Participation of women in economic decision-making

(a) Incidence and trends

96. The increase in women's role in the economy, the growing recognition of their contribution to development and the changes that have already occurred in women's access to education in many regions of the world, as well as the progress made in diversifying their fields of study, has not been reflected in their participation in economic decision-making.

97. The rate of participation of women managers world wide at all levels is far below their rate of participation in the labour market. There is a clear concentration in some sectors and activities; the presence of women at the senior levels is low and at the junior and middle levels of management, it is medium to high. In general, the higher the level of decision-making, the lower the level of women's participation. Even female-dominated sectors are often managed by men. However, there is some indication that changes are occurring. The number of women managers is expanding as a result of improved access to education and the longer presence of women in the labour market. This, in turn, is linked to a higher age at marriage and to low fertility. Women managers are concentrated at the junior and middle levels of management and are trying to expand their career path. Some countries estimate that even with the influence of the above-mentioned factors (education and then longer presence in the labour market), the rate of increase is slow in comparison with other achievements in the fields of education and employment. Reports from the European region suggest that the level of women managers is higher in private enterprises than in the public sector.

98. Almost every country reported an increase in the number of women entrepreneurs. Although in many developing and developed countries, the number of enterprises owned by women is growing faster than that owned by men, they tend to be concentrated in activities with lower rates of return, and face difficulties in expanding their activities. For example, in China, women represent one third of the 14 million persons self-employed. However, their income lags behind that of men because of the size of the enterprise and the type of business, which typically includes low-paying industries and trades.

However, as women are beginning to enter into higher technical and professional industries, the income gap is narrowing.

(b) Main obstacles identified for women managers

(i) Access to third-level education and training

99. One of the major obstacles to the increase in the proportion of women managers in Asia and Africa is the unequal access of girls and women to education, particularly to third-level education. In other regions, the inequality in access to third-level education has almost been eliminated. However, there are problems concerning the quality of education in certain subjects. Moreover, technical and vocational training is still male-dominated in all countries reporting. Lack of counselling and career guidance for girls and boys has also been cited as a contributing factor in maintaining traditional fields of studies for women and men.

(ii) Women's career choices

100. Educational background has a certain impact on the choice of career. Most countries report that women are still inclined to choose careers in traditionally female occupations. Careers in the humanities, the arts, teaching, the social services and tourism are among women's "preferred" careers, while in most countries, men receive 90 per cent of the diplomas in the technical areas. A typical pattern reflected in some reports is one of women gaining entry into administrative jobs, usually having a humanities-oriented rather than a technical background, and this leads to a lack of confidence in women's effectiveness, particularly in the manufacturing sector.

(iii) Administrative rules and recruitment procedures

101. Examples of discrimination based on gender roles implied in administrative rules and procedures were presented by Governments when referring to recruitment techniques and selection interviews when women apply for non-traditional jobs. Some systems such as the career-tracking system, lead to different personnel management for men and women, when different task distribution is given to men and women with the same qualifications. Others referred to governmental training programmes that train women in traditional occupations. Some countries reported that the gender of the candidate was a factor in recruitment.

(iv) Factors for promotion

102. In most countries women are concentrated in jobs with horizontal mobility. Women are perceived as less interested in upgrading their qualifications and careers and are less able to take advantage of company training. Some reports refer to the fact that men form the majority of those selecting managers and usually discriminate against women. Scoring methods used for promotion could provide a major barrier for women. Concern was expressed that as assessment techniques become more sophisticated and complex, it will be increasingly difficult to challenge potential sources of discrimination.

(v) Corporate culture

103. Attitudinal discrimination is part of the corporate culture and this is still strongly biased against women;. for example, it was reported that men as spouses do not provide the emotional back-up that a professional woman needs; that different assessments are given to women and men candidates; that few women or men wish to work for a woman; that there is a lack of solidarity among women; and that there is direct discrimination by men in denying women promotion to top posts. However, there is no specific reference to sexual harassment.

(vi) Work and family responsibilities

104. Countries were unanimous in their position that the burden of family responsibilities fell on women and that there was an absence or insufficient sharing of family responsibilities by men and by society as well, while at the same time, women were expected to fulfil their productive and reproductive roles. The lack or inadequacy of day-care centres was the most-cited obstacle.

(c) Main obstacles identified for women entrepreneurs

(i) Lack of equal access to economic resources, such as land (urban and rural)

105. In most countries, there is no legal impediment to women's equal access to land. However, in many countries, in particular those with more than one legal system, most land titles are in the name of the man, even if the property is jointly owned, and inheritance practices are often male-biased, contrary to the constitution or other provisions. An unequal distribution of land between men and women farmers is observed world wide. It is generally reported that men own more land or have greater assets than women.

(ii) Lack of equal access to credit

106. In most countries, because women do not have collateral or knowledge about the formal financial system, they face certain constraints relating to access to credit, and have to rely on informal sources of financing with high rates of interest. A number of reports also suggest that the main problem for women owners of small and medium-sized enterprises is financial management because of their inexperience in that area. Lack of credibility by formal financial institutions is also cited as a discriminating factor against women.

(iii) Non-existence or inadequate training in management and technical skills

107. There are few opportunities for women to be trained in management and technical skills. The training they receive is often stereotyped by gender, as women, themselves, tend to choose training in traditional occupational areas.

(iv) Non-existence of networking and role models

108. Most women entrepreneurs lack female role models and networking of women in the male-dominated business environment. A number of reports note that the lack

of a woman's "track record", was interpreted, according to certain stereotypical criteria, as inexperience in business, particularly in the manufacturing sector. The lack of networking with other spheres of women's activities, for example in the political area was noted.

(v) Insufficient or inadequate access to support services, including information

109. Inadequate career counselling and guidance for young women, the lack of public services and the male-dominated environment of support services are reported to impact negatively on women entrepreneurs.

(vi) Insufficient and inadequate availability of data and information relating to women entrepreneurs

110. Information on women entrepreneurs and their achievements is almost non-existent. Surveys do not usually contain sex-disaggregated data on women and men entrepreneurs. Recent research activities undertaken by specialized agencies, women's and professional organizations and policy makers have begun to focus on women entrepreneurs because of their increased participation in business start-ups. However, lack of data is the main restriction.

111. The working environment is seen as a male preserve, full of discriminatory procedures, with inadequate resources for handling both family responsibilities and productive activities.

(d) Measures adopted to increase the number of women managers

112. Various policies and programmes that have been adopted in a number of countries have proved to be successful in increasing the number and proportion of women managers.

(i) Affirmative action

113. Some Governments have put into force an Equal Employment Opportunity Act for Women, requiring the public sector, and sometimes the private sector as well, to establish affirmative action programmes for women managers and to prepare annual reports thereon. In some cases, broad guidelines have been issued referring to equal partnership between men and women. In others, affirmative action has defined a percentage or quota to be reached, and merit quotas as well as regional quotas have been introduced for women candidates. Some countries have required that a certain percentage of the members of the competitive examination commission be women. One country set up a special executive service to implement public sector policies.

114. In one country, the largest national confederation of labour unions has formulated an action programme aimed at promoting women in trade-union decision-making bodies by the year 2000 and set a target for women in the central executive committee.

(ii) Changing rules and procedures

115. In order to introduce changes, severe penalties are being applied against private enterprises that do not comply with the Equal Employment Opportunity Act with respect to recruitment, training, promotion and in-house day-care centres. Other countries have issued special management guidelines concerning recruitment, placement and training of women civil servants. Still other countries review public sector appointment procedures on a regular basis. In other countries, private companies have to report annually to established bodies on the comparative status of women and men in relation to recruitment, promotion, qualification, training, working conditions and pay. Exemption from taxes for employers or contributions for training grants when employers employ women in traditionally male-dominated professions were among the measures taken in other countries.

116. In some countries, the protection of women has been relaxed (for example, regarding ILO Convention No. 89 which prohibits women's night work) in order to allow women's access to managerial positions. Parental leave is allowed in some countries; in other countries, mainly in Asia and the developed countries, the network of day-care centres has been expanded dramatically. Flexible personnel policies have been introduced in some countries, including guidance on parental leave, conferences on dependant care and the issue of work and family responsibilities. In some developed countries, equal opportunity commissions comprising representatives of trade unions, women's associations and employers have been installed. In one country, it was established by law that trade unions include women in the bargaining between trade unions and employers.

(iii) Information and networking

117. One country reported that there were regular meetings between presidents and employers of large enterprises and government officials concerning women's advancement to managerial levels across the nation.

(iv) Education

118. In some countries, actions have focused on the elementary and secondary schools, where the study of home economics courses has been established for girls and boys. In other countries, technical studies have been extended to girls. In one country, an engineering college was opened for girls only.

(e) Measures adopted to assist women entrepreneurs

119. Several public and non-governmental organizations manage specific programmes for the development of women's entrepreneurship.

120. Many reports mentioned the creation of a loan programme for women which would guarantee loans up to a certain amount as a successful way to increase the number of loans. Some actions have included women's non-governmental and employers' organizations managing their own financial funds for their affiliates. The opening of windows specifically for women in formal banks was reported. Special funds allocated to women entrepreneurs have also been cited.

121. In some countries, a national women's council has been created in order to review issues and make recommendations to legislative bodies. It has also been reported that Governments consult with non-governmental organizations concerning national policies regarding women entrepreneurs.

122. In some countries, women entrepreneurs have established linkages with the legislative body, which facilitates bringing their interests before that body.

123. Many countries reported actions taken by governmental institutions and women's networks relating to counselling and training of women owners and potential owners, as well as the creation of long-term training centres. Training was offered in such areas as management, finance, technical and business skills, and international marking, as well as in self-confidence.

124. In some cases, a one-year voluntary mentoring programme has been established and mentors have been recruited by governmental agencies dealing with women entrepreneurs.

125. In one country, women entrepreneurs have been secured a certain number of government contracts (procurement contracts).

126. Efforts have been made to collect and disseminate information on women businesses. In some cases, economic censuses include specific surveys on women entrepreneurs.

127. Research by the national machinery on women, universities and non-governmental organizations is beginning to be effected.

128. Small cottage industry projects directed to women were implemented in the rural areas of many developing countries, with very high rates of success. In some cases, the ministry of women's affairs was the body managing the women's entrepreneurship development programme.

129. In most developing countries, supportive actions are provided by global and women's non-governmental organizations as well as by specific non-governmental organizations.

130. In a number of developing countries, international organizations are involved in the promotion of women entrepreneurs, with programmes and pilot projects for the self-employed, including training in management and credit.

Notes

1/ Economic and Social Council resolution 1990/15, annex.

2/ International Labour Organization, "The changing role of women in the economy: employment and social issues" (Geneva, November 1994) (GB.261/EST/2/2), p. 3.

3/ Asian Development Bank, Women in Development, Indonesia country briefing paper (Manila, ADB Programs Department East, 1991).

4/ International Labour Organization, "The changing role of women in the economy ...", p. 6.

5/ Ibid., p. 5.

6/ Ibid.